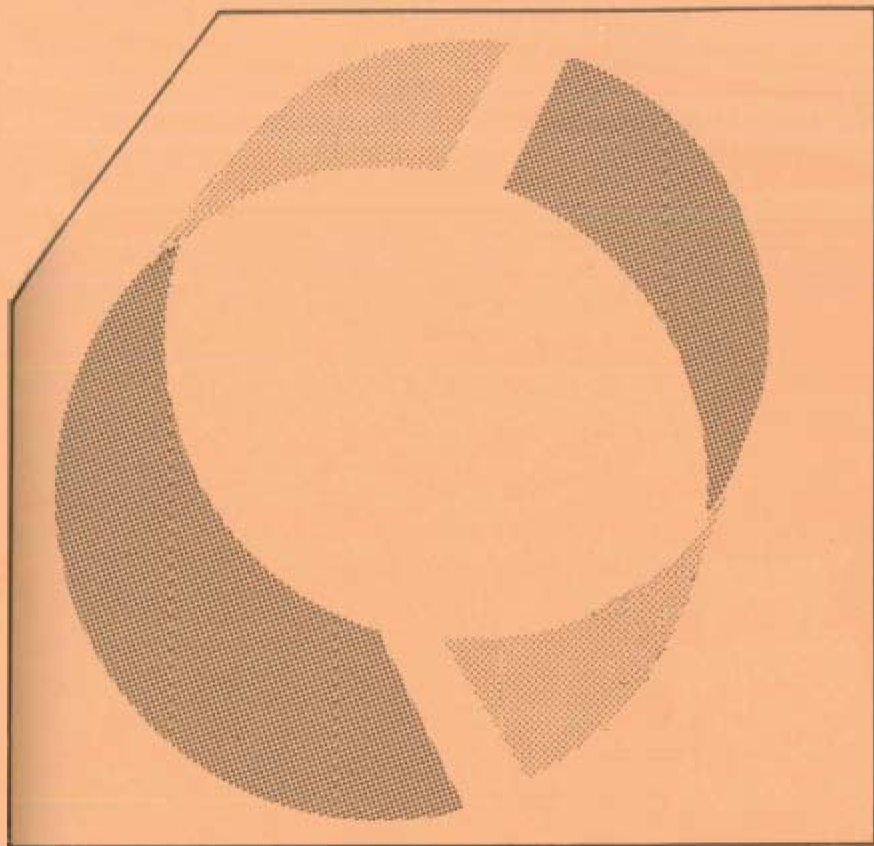
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THE NOTION OF 'SELF' IN BUDDHISM

Bart Dessein (ed.)

COMMUNICATION
& COGNITION

" [...] in an overwhelming majority of instances the definitions or epithets of ātman point to something utterly different from an individual soul or principle of individual life, thus evidencing the misconception inherent in standard-renderings such as "I" or "Ego", adopted by several scholars, and to a lesser degree even in the more current and more anodyne rendering of *ātman* by "Self," based on a purely linguistic equivalence without regard to the technical specifications of the term.

(M. Falk, IHQ, 1940, pp.649-650)

INTRODUCTION

Bart Dessein

Originating in the Indian tradition of Vedism and Brahmanism, the path of salvation proclaimed by the Buddha is on the one hand indebted to these philosophical systems, on the other hand, it is shaped as a 'critical' answer to them. A central -- if not the major -- concept of Brahmanism was the existence of a persistent self *ātman*, representing the ultimate Brahman (Brahmā) in each entity. Religious salvation consisted in the osmosis of *ātman* and *brahman* which, actually, are two aspects of an identical principle.

The Buddha denied the Brahmanical notion of *ātman* as an individual soul (*jīvatman*)that is related to the single controlling power that is Brahman, the universal soul (*paramātman*), by claiming that the view of a self (and of what belongs to a self -- for that matter) is a false view (*mithyādṛṣṭi*). It is to the śramaṇas and brāhmaṇas who are possessed by craving (*tṛṣṇā*) that such a false view belongs. According to the Buddhist perspective, the 'self' (*ātman*) is the composite of the five aggregates that, due to the karmic law of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*), are selfless. Hence, also the composite is empty. The Buddha used terms such as 'self' (*ātman*) or 'inward' (*ādhyātmika*) only as conventional ways of expression, serving to cure worldlings (*pṛthagjana*) of the disease of false views. These aspects are discussed by Lalji 'Shravak' in *«Buddha's Rejection of the Brahmanical Notion of Ātman»*.

Analyzing passages from the *Nikāya*s and *Āgama*s, which belong to the earliest strata of Buddhist *sūtra* (scriptural text) literature, Luis O. Gómez, in *«The Elusive Self: Preliminary Reflections on Its Denial»*, reflects on two basic questions: First "What may have been the 'self' or 'selves' that were the object of the Buddhist critique," and second, is our idea of 'self' and 'not-self' not determined by our own contemporary Western standpoints? These questions lead to the paradox that no-self is, actually, very much about self: no-self is taken to be characterized by absence of control; and yet, it is not by restoring the notion of 'self' that control is achieved. Agency and possession (control) "are misconceptions of our relationship to pleasurable, painful, and neutral feelings and sensation." Control is achieved by the practice of the path that leads to salvation. This is the ontological Middle Way.

From Magadha, the cradle of the Buddhist faith, the doctrine spread to the South, (leading to the Pāli tradition), and to the North and the Northwest (Gandhāra, Bactria, and Kaśmīra). In the northwestern region, the major

philosophical development and the apex of early Buddhism (*Hīnayāna*) is represented in the conglomerate school of the Sarvāstivādins. Sarvāstivāda philosophical texts (*Abhidharma*) reveal traces of the struggle that the concepts '*ātman*,' '*pratītyasamutpāda*' (dependent origination), and '*karman*' (causality), and their interrelations, implied for Buddhist philosophers. From more or less unrelated schemes to explain causality by conditioned production and its connection with *ātman*, an evolution is seen to causality explained in terms of a set of four main causes (*hetu*) and four sub-causes (*pratyaya*), and an explanation of *ātman* solely in terms of conditioned production, is seen. This evolution is outlined in my *«Self, Dependent Origination and Action in Bactrian and Gandhāran Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma Texts»*.

While for the development of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Kaśmīra region, situated at the crossroads between the Orient and the West, proved to be of primary importance in the development of a devotional variant of the original Buddhist faith (starting around the beginning of the common era), the region situated more to the south, however, was instrumental in the further philosophical development of Buddhism. Within Mahāyāna Buddhism, we have -- essentially -- to distinguish the Indian Madhyamaka, Yogācāra-Prāsaṅgika and Yogācāra-Svātantrika schools. A key person in the philosophical development of Buddhism, was Vasubandhu. At first a propounder of the Sautrāntika sub-branch of the Sarvāstivāda school, he was later -- by his brother Asaṅga -- converted to Yogācāra (Consciousness-only). The doctrine of Vasubandhu is investigated by Marek Mejor in *«"There is no self" (nātmāsti) - Some observations from Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa and the Yuktidīpikā»*. In this article, Mejor shows that the *Yuktidīpikā*, an anonymous commentary on the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* by the Sāṃkhya teacher Īśvarakṛṣṇa, is indebted to Vasubandhu's major work, the *Abhidharmakośa*. In the *Abhidharmakośa*, in accordance with the line of Sarvāstivāda philosophical development, the 'self' is inserted in an explanation of the process of transmigration and the concept of intermediate being (*antarābhava*). According to the *Yuktidīpikā*, "there is no 'self' because it is not cognizable by any means of valid cognition."

Stefan Anacker also deals with Vasubandhu in *«No Self, "Self", and Neither-Self-nor-Non-Self in Mahāyāna writings of Vasubandhu»*. In this article, Vasubandhu's denial of a 'personality-self' is examined from different angles, one of which is the concept of '*ālayavijñāna*': storehouse-consciousness. According to the Yogācārins, the world of phenomenal existence rests in consciousness only. Each action invoked by perception in the phenomenal world leads to a germ (*bīja*) that, in its turn, is the fundament for a new rebirth, and that is massed up with other likewise karmically loaded germs to form the storehouse-

consciousness. As a worldling constantly acts, this collection is subject to permanent change. Since the world of phenomenal experience is characterized by suffering (through rebirth) and rests in consciousness, liberation from suffering is closely related to consciousness. Since this storehouse-consciousness itself is constantly changing from one moment to the next, it is, in fact, "not an 'entity' at all; it is not a self" (in the same way as also the 'self,' being a composite of the five ever-changing aggregates, is not an 'entity'). However, the storehouse-consciousness explains our sense of 'self.' Because our consciousness is defiled, it perceives the storehouse-consciousness as the true self. "In reality," however, "it is impossible to distinguish 'common-sense reality' from a hallucination! True reality is recognizing the absence of self." This -- in Buddhist terminology -- is the "Middle Mode of Progress" (*madhyamā pratipad*): non-discriminatory knowledge in which mental constructions are no longer present.

'*Mahātman*,' the magnanimous one, is reflected on by Christian Lindtner in *«Magnanimity of Madhyamaka»*. From the observation that for the Mādhyamikas -- those seeking the Middle -- reality is beyond both *ātman* and not-*ātman*, and that the *mahātmans* have neither greed (*rāga*) nor absence of greed (*vairāgya*), it is claimed that they are great souls seeing 'suchness' (*tattva*). Both the words '*mahātman*' and '*tattva*' were introduced by the second century Indian Madhyamaka philosopher Nāgārjuna. Also the term '*buddhi*' that, as the terms '*tattva*' and '*mahātman*' was borrowed from earlier Indian philosophy, plays a crucial role in Nāgārjuna's thought. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, '*mahātman*' became synonym of '*bodhisattva*'. The *bodhisattva* sees '*tattva*': he sees that the nominal duality between the cycle of rebirth (*saṃsāra*) and liberation in *nirvāṇa* is only apparent. This is the result of the law of dependent origination: "nothing exists in and by itself. Everything is interrelated. There is no *saṃsāra* without *nirvāṇa*." For Nāgārjuna, '*buddhi*' is the dynamic means of scientific analysis in terms of what factors are and what they are not. The state of '*nirvāṇa*,' the immortal place that in Buddhism has replaced the immortal soul, can be attained through knowledge (*buddhi*). It is the *bodhisattva*, the *mahātman*, who can attain to this goal.

In *«Beyond Self and Not-Self: the Mahāyāna Vision of Multidimensional Being»*, Peter Della Santina sets off from the observation that the Buddha is to be compared with a physician who rejected all theories and dogmas. This attitude refers to the above-mentioned "Middle Mode of Progress," theory of which Nāgārjuna is the most famous exponent. This non-discriminatory position culminates in the philosophical theories of the Yogācāra-Svātantrika master Śāntarakṣita. In the literature of the formative period of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the Hīnayāna ideal of the '*arhat*,' the Buddhist saint, is gradually replaced by the

'*bodhisattva*,' "a supra-mundane and exalted personality" who accumulates merit and knowledge, enabling him to see that it is consciousness and conscious activity that is responsible for the appearance of the 'self.' For Śāntarakṣita, continuity (rebirth) does not depend on an entity to be effectuated, but depends on consciousness. It is the *bodhisattva*, the *mahātman* (the magnanimous one) who attains to the realization that -- as also consciousness depends on non-real entities -- it is itself unreal. As Della Santina puts it: "While Nāgārjuna might well have said that the real existence of all entities is refuted by analysis or reason or examination, Śāntarakṣita prefers to use the logically loaded concept of valid instruments of cognition."

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BUDDHA'S REJECTION OF THE BRAHMANICAL NOTION OF ĀTMAN

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Origin and nature of the universe and the ultimate reality have been most engrossing subjects for philosophical speculation. In Indian thinking, the *Veda*s are supposed to be the primary sources of knowledge. In the Vedic hymns, the concept of *ekaṁ sat* (one reality) and a single controlling power was formulated. Its realization in the entire universe was accepted. This concept was further developed in the Upanisadic literature. It is in this context that the concepts of *Brahman* and *Ātman* developed. Both these words occur in the *Veda*s with different meanings. The term 'Brahman' has generally been used in the sense of 'prayer', 'hymn', 'sacred knowledge', 'magic formula'. (Hume, 1968: Intro: 14; Radhakrishnan, 1958: 163, note #1). *Ātman* has signified breath, vital air, vital essence (... *Vātamātmā* ... *RigVeda*, X-16: 3: *ātmā prāṇo vātaṁ*.... (*RigVeda Saṃhitā*, X-16:3).

In the Upanisadic literature both are assumed as the basis of the universe. Gradually these acquired the meaning of *paramātman* (super or universal soul) and *ātman* or *jīvātman* (individual soul) respectively. Individual soul has been treated as the micro of the universal soul. In course of time, both the concepts became identical. From the objective side, the ultimate reality was manifested as *Brahman* and this was also called *ātman* from the subjective side. Radhakrishnan (1958: 151) has explained the progressive development of the concept of *ātman* (self) through four stages: (i) the bodily self, (ii) the empirical self, (iii) the transcendental self, and (iv) the absolute self.

In Upanisadic literature, the concept of *ātman*, its nature and characteristics are widely described. In *Bṛahadāraṇyakopaniṣad* (=*Bṛh.*, I-4.1) *ātman* is assumed as the original reality. Everything is supposed to originate from *ātman* or *Brahman.*[1] It is said that *ātman* is *Brahman*, consisting of knowledge (*vijñānamaya*), of mind (*manomaya*), of breath (*prāṇamaya*), of seeing (*cakṣumaya*)... and of everything (*sarvamaya*) (*Bṛh.*, IV-4.5, p.105-6). Describing its characteristic and its bodily and universal relation, it is said that *ātman* is not this, not that (*neti neti*); it is unseizable (*agṛhyo*), indestructible (*aśīryo*), unattached (*asaṅgo*), unbound (*asito*). It does not tremble (*na vyathate*). It is not injured (*na riṣyati*).[2] *Ātman* dwells in all phenomena of the universe, and it controls everything from within. (*Bṛh.*, III-7, p.93-95) *Ātman* is overlord of all things.[3]

In *Kaṭhopaniṣad* (II-18-20) also, it is stated that the *ātman* is eternal, indestructible. It is neither born nor dies, it is constant, primeval. It cannot be slain along with the body.[4] It is more minute than the most minute, and greater than the greatest.[5] Dealing with its relation with the body, it is said that *śarīra* (body) is just like a chariot and *ātman* is the rider of this chariot. Intellect is supposed as chariot driver, mind as the reins, and sense organs as the horses. *Ātman* is the enjoyer of the object of senses.[6]

In *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* (*Muṇḍ*), it is said that *ātman* is omniscient and all-wise. *Ātman* is constituted of mind. It is the leader of the life-breath and of the body.[7] *Ātman*, which pervades everything like the butter in the milk, is *Brahman*.[8] *Ātman* is free from all sins (*apahatapāpmā*). It is without old age (*vijaro*), without death (*vimṛtyuḥ*), without sorrow (*viśoko*), without hunger (*vijighitso*), without thirst (*apipāsaḥ*) (*Chāndogyopaniṣad*, VIII-7.1, p.71).

In brief, the characteristics of Brahmanical *ātman* are that it is permanent (*nitya*), without sorrow (*visoka*), consisting of mind (*manomaya*), ageless (*vijaro*), without death (*vimṛtyuḥ*), unseizable (*agṛhyo*), indestructible (*aśīryo*).

Early Buddhist literature also refers to the different opinions about the notions, nature and characteristics of brahmanical *ātman* in the contemporary society of the Buddha. *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (I-1) deals with sixty-two such speculations and the theories of six heretical teachers, contemporaries of the Buddha.

Buddha's rejection of *attā*

In my view, Buddha completely rejected the existence of *atta* and regarded all the notions related to *atta* as *micchādiṭṭhi* (wrong views). He stated that these *micchādiṭṭhis* are only products of the ficklemindedness of those *Samaṇas* and *Brahmaṇas* who experienced the worldly feelings and were obsessed with own craving (*taṇhā*).[9] Buddha considers the *attadiṭṭhi* as *amanasikaraṇīya dhamma* (things unworthy of attention)[10], because it produces the *micchādiṭṭhi*. (*M.N.*, I-2, p.12). A person holding *micchādiṭṭhi*[11] will not be released from the suffering of this world involving birth, old-age, death, suffering. One who rightly experiences the phenomena as *idaṁ dukkhaṁ* (this is suffering), *ayaṁ dukkha-samudayo* (this is the cause of suffering), *ayaṁ dukkhanirodho* (this is the cessation of suffering), *ayaṁ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā* (this is the path

leading to the cessation of suffering), will be able to remove the *saṁyojana*s (bonds of life)[12] (*M.N.*, I-2, p.14).

The knowledge obtained by the Buddha at the time of his enlightenment, was the realization of *Paṭicca-Samuppāda* (Dependent Origination), the principle which explains that all the *saṅkhāra*s are impermanent, conditioned and arise from a cause. (*M.V.*, I-1, p.1). At the time of *Dhamma-cakka-pavattana* (Turning of the Wheel of the Law), preaching the *ariya sacca* (four noble truths) to five ascetics, Buddha presented that all *saṅkhāra*s are *dukkha* (suffering) (*M.V.*, I-7, p.13). The very two characteristics *anicca* and *dukkha* deny the existence of any permanent *attā*, because permanence and being without sorrow are the integral and essential characteristics of *attā*. Still then the Buddha was specific in clearly rejecting *attā* as a permanent substance. After receiving the *upasampadā* (ordination) by those five ascetics, Buddha preached them that all the five *khandha*s (aggregates) are *anatta* (non-self) (*M.V.*, I-8, p.16-18).

Anicca-dukkha-anatta, these are the three basic principles of Buddhism which deny any concept of *attā*. This article mainly discusses one of these three fundamental principles, viz.: '*anatta*'.

For those who believe in the eternity or annihilation of *attā* and *loka* (universe), the Buddha presented the theory of *paṭicca-samuppāda* (dependent origination), and wisely avoided both the extremes of *sassata* and *uccheda*. He explained the existence through his middle path and presented the solution of some major metaphysical problems. Buddha said that every thing originates from a particular cause. A thing which originates from a cause, will also cease with the cessation of that cause.

For the rejection of the existence of permanent *attā* in the body or in the components of the body, or in the aggregates, Buddha explained that this body is not absolute, but is a composite of the *pañcakkhandha*s (five aggregates). *Samaṇa*s and *Brāhmaṇa*s regarded these *khandha*s in composite form or separately as *attā*. Buddha always argued with them and convinced them that, since these *khandha*s have the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and changeableness, they cannot be regarded as *attā*.

Denial of *attā* in the *Pañcakkhandhas*

Defining the individual, Buddha said that a person consists of two parts, viz., *nāma* (mental or immaterial) and *rūpa* (physical or material). Mental part includes four *khandhas* (aggregates) - *vedanā* (feeling), *saññā* (perception), *saṅkhāra* (dispositions), *viññāṇa* (consciousness). Material part has only one *khandha* (aggregate) - *rūpa* (form). These *pañcakkhandhas* represent the psycho-physical aspect of an individual. Besides these *pañcakkhandhas* there is nothing else of which a person is constituted.

These *pañcakkhandhas* are *anicca, dukkha* and *vipariṇāmadhammin* (changeable). Buddha said that all the *khandhas*, whatsoever of past, future or present, subjective or objective, gross or minute, far or near, excellent or inferior are impermanent, full of suffering, changeable and not-self. (*M.V.*, I.8, p.16-18; *S.N.*, III, pp.276, 295; IV, p.327). The ignorant, unconverted man regards the *pañcakhandhas* as *attā* or *attā* as having *khandhas* or the *khandhas* in the *attā*, or *attā* in *khandhas*.[13] Buddha criticizes all views. Explaining the principle of *anatta*, Buddha, dealing with each *khandha*, has shown that none of the *khandhas* can be identified as *attā*. Buddha in his arguments with Nigaṇtha putta Saccaka says that when these *khandhas* are not under control of anybody, it would be improper to consider these *khandhas* as 'this is mine' or 'this is I' or 'this is my *attā*'.[14]

Explaining to those who assume *vedanā* as *attā*, Buddha says that there is no *attā* as such. There are only three kinds of *vedanās* -- *dukkhā vedanā* (painful feeling), *sukhā vedanā* (pleasant feeling) and *upekkhā vedanā* (indifferent feeling). A person feels only one *vedanā* (feeling) at a time. None can feel simultaneously all the three *vedanās*. If one assumes any one of these feelings as *attā*, when that feeling ceases, then with the ceasing of that particular feeling, one will also have to accept the cessation of the *attā*. Sometimes, that particular *vedanā* may not be felt. One has then to accept the nonexistence of *attā*, which is absolutely different from its so-called characteristics. There are some who consider that *vedanā* is not *attā*, but that *appaṭisaṁvedana* (absence of feeling) is *attā*.[15] Buddha asks them if there is no feeling, how could one have the feeling of 'It is I'? Who regards that neither *vedanā* nor *appaṭisaṁvedana* is *attā*, but that still the *attā* is being felt[16], pointing out a fault in their view. Buddha said that if all feelings would be destroyed, then how would there be 'It is I'? (*D.N.*, II-2, p.53).

Some seeking the *attā* in a person, assume *saññā* (perception) as *attā*. Regarding this, they have three different opinions (i) *attā* is *oḷārika* (gross), *rūpiṁ* (having form) *cātumahābhūmika* (made of four great elements), *kavaḷīkārāhārabhakkhaṁ* (living on material food); (ii) *attā* is *manomaya* (consisting of mind), *sabbaṅgapaccaṅgikaṁ* (having perfect limbs), *ahīnendriyaṁ* (consisting of perfect sense organs); (iii) *attā* is *arūpiṁ* (formless), *saññāmaya* (consisting of perception). Buddha showed that the characteristics of *saññā* is different from the characteristics of the so-called *attā* (*D.N.*, I-9, p.155).

Buddha seems very much particular about identifying any aggregate with *attā*. He repeatedly reaches the principle of *paṭicca-samuppāda*, in which lies the characteristics which oppose any idea of *attā*. In Brahmanical literature, it is said that after death *ātman* (*attā*) leaves the body and takes another new form.[17] Some *Brāhmaṇa*s have misunderstood the preaching of Buddha about *viññāṇa* (consciousness) and regarded it as *attā*. As Buddha explained to Ānaṇda, "If consciousness would not come in the womb of the mother, how could the *nāma* and *rūpa* be formed".[18] Regarding this statement, Bhikkhu Sāti held a *micchādiṭṭhi* (wrong view) that "the same *viññāna* transmigrates, runs through, not any other. This is the *viññāṇa* which speaks, feels and experiences the fruition of good and bad deeds".[19] Buddha rebuked Bhikkhu Sāti for having such a *micchādiṭṭhi* and said that the dependent origination of *viññāṇa* has been illustrated in many ways. Being originated from a cause, *viññāṇa* will be *anicca*, *dukkha* and *vipariṇāmadhammin*. (*M.N.*, I-38, p.317). It will never be permanent, without sorrow and stable.

Questions arising out of Rejection of *Attā*

Buddha's theory of *paṭicca-samuppāda* denied the possibilities of any permanent substance. *Paṭicca-samuppāda*, which is called 'the wheel of life' or 'the wheel of becoming', is a chain of twelve links (*nidānas*). These links are both cause and effect. Every link constitutes itself as cause for the subsequently resulting effect, and as resulting effect for the preceding cause.

Seeking for the existence of *attā* and its relation with the body, heretics have often asked questions about the links of the causal chain as: which is the *jarā-maraṇa* (old age and death) and of whom is there *jarā-maraṇa*?[20] Who eats the *viññāṇāhāra* (consciousness as food)? Who touches, who feels, who craves, who grasps? etc.[21] Many other questions were also raised, such as: Who acts and

who experiences the result,[22]? Are suffering and happiness created by oneself or by someone else;[23]? Is body of one own self or of other? etc. Motive of all these questions is only to establish or to prove the existence of permanent *attā* or *jīva* (being) in the body. Dealing with such questions Buddha did not consider them as proper questions and said that if one thinks that the *sarīra* (body) is the *jīva* (*attā* or soul) or the *sarīra* is different from the *jīva*, both ways of thinking are wrong. The proper question should be: "Which cause is responsible for that result". It should not be asked which is the *jarā* (old age) and *maraṇa* (death), and for whom there is *jarā-maraṇa*, but one should ask by which this old age and death is caused (*S.N.*, II-67, p.96). Buddha said that one who knows the reality of the *paṭicca-samuppāda* and *paṭicca samupanna*, never runs behind the past or future periods, and never doubts about the present: as 'was I in the past?', 'what was I in the past?', 'will I be in the future?', 'what am I at present?', etc. Such kind of irrelevant questions confuse the person. (*S.N.*, II-12-20, p.25).

Buddha says that this body is neither yours nor of others, but it is evolved by the process of *paṭicca-samuppāda*.[24] Buddha further says that one who believes that the same doer of an action will experience its result or that one who believes that one acts and the other experiences, both the assumptions are types of two extremes called *sassata diṭṭhi* (eternal view) and *ucchedadiṭṭhi* (annihilation view). Leaving these two extremes, Buddha preached his doctrine of the Middle Path, i.e., *Paṭicca-Samuppāda*. (*S.N.*, II-12.46, p.64-65). To those who regard that *dukkha* (suffering) or *sukha* (happiness) is made by oneself or by someone else, Buddha remarks that *dukkha* or *sukha* is neither made by oneself nor by someone else, but it arises from *phassa* (touch). If there will be no *phassa*, there will be no *dukkha* or *sukha*. For one who holds the above wrong views, his *dukkha* and *sukha* also arises from *phassa* only. It is not possible that his *dukkha* or *sukha* arises without *phassa* (touch). (*S.N.*, II-12.67, p.96; II-12.25, p.33-35).

Was Buddha Silent on Metaphysical Problems

Some scholars are of the opinion that Buddha always avoided to give a definite answer or was silent on some metaphysical problems, which were widely discussed in his period, such as: Is the world *sassata* (eternal)? Is the world *asassata* (not eternal)? Is the world *antavā* (finite or having an end)? Is the world *anantavā* (infinite or having no-end)? Is *jīva* (being, soul) identical with *sarīra* (body)? Are *jīva* and *sarīra* different? Does Tathāgata exist after the

death or not, or exists and does not exist, or neither exists nor does not exist. (*D.N.*, I-9, p.156).

It is not proper to say that Buddha did not give a definite answer or was silent on these questions. Actually, Buddha gave the answer to these questions and said that these questions are '*avyākata*', i.e., 'which can not be answered in yes or no'. Main purpose of the preaching of the Buddha was to protect the tormented people of the world from suffering and to lead them towards *nirodha* (cessation of suffering), *Nibbāna.* Such questions are neither salutary nor connected with the essence of the Law, they neither help in cultivating moral life, nor for the removal of aversion, neither for destruction of passions nor for cessation of suffering, neither for appeasement nor for developing wisdom, neither for enlightenment nor for achieving *Nibbāna* (*D.N.*, I-9, p.157; *M.N.*, II-13, p.111-113). Explaining this point to Vacchagotta, Buddha said: since the heretics consider the body, aggregates, sense organs as *attā*, they could explain these questions according to their own assumptions. Buddha defined the body or the constituents of the body as *paṭicca-samuppanna* (dependently originated). He did not consider it as 'It is I', 'It is mine', etc. (*S.N.*, IV-44.7, p.335-341).

Buddha never talked about 'who is in me' or 'who is the controller of this body or world', but he explained what is *kusala* (good) and what is *akusala* (bad). Who is *ariya* (noble) and who is *anariya* (ignoble), what is *dukkha* (suffering), what is the *dukkha-samudaya* (cause of suffering), what is *dukkha nirodha* (cessation of suffering), and what is *dukkha-nirodha-gāminī-patipadā* (way to achieve the cessation of suffering). Buddha said that if we would wrangle with such insignificant questions, then our situation will be like that of an arrow-pierced man who does not think about the removal of the arrow and does not care about the first aid for the wound, but asks about the arrow, as to which metal it is made of, where it came from, who has pierced him, etc. (*M.N.*, II-13, p.110-111). The man wrangling with such kinds of unnecessary questions would not annihilate the endless suffering of the cycle of rebirth-death. Buddha did not want to solve the problems only by logic or argument. He did not want to lead anybody towards the *Nibbāna* by simply showering blessings or by granting boons, but his purpose was to preach the Path of Morality for the emancipation of afflictions-obstructed people.

The words '*atta*' and '*ajjhattika*' in Pali Buddhist Literature

The words '*atta*' and '*ajjhaṭtika*' (*adhyātmika*) have been used in Buddhist literature several times in several contexts. If there is no '*attā*', why does Buddha use the word *atta* and how will there be *ajjhattika*? Of course, Buddha has used the word *atta* many times, but this word is not used in the sense of any permanent substance or in any spiritual sense as in the Brahmanic thinking. This is only a conventional way of expression. After his first *dhamma-cakka-pavattana* (Turning of the Wheel of the Law) at Isipatana (Sarnath near Varanasi) when Buddha was going to Uruvelā, on his route he met the Bhaddavaggīya companions who were searching a prostitute who had stolen their things and had run away. Buddha advised them that it would be better for them to search the *atta* rather than the prostitute.[25] Here, the advice to search for *atta* (self) denotes the knowing of oneself, about the body, about the union of the five aggregates. It has no connection with any idea of permanent *attā*.

In his last days, after recovering from a serious illness, addressing Ānanda, Buddha declared that he had no Teacher's Fist. There was no secrecy in his teaching. Buddha advised Ānanda to lead a life of self reliance, self dependency, *Dhamma* reliant, *Dhamma* refuge, not to depend on any other.[26] Explaining this, Buddha said that one who develops the four *satipaṭṭhānas* (four foundations of mindfulness) (i.e. *kāye kāyānupassanā, vedanāsu vedanānupassanā, citte cittānupassanā, dhamme dhammānupassanā*), will lead a life by which he will be self reliant, self dependent, *Dhamma* reliant, *Dhamma* refuge, not to depend on any other (*D.N.*, II-3, p.80; see also *S.N.*, III-22.43, p.274). In the *Atthavagga* of the *Dhammapada* (XII) also this word *atta* is used very frequently, but never in the sense of permanent *attā*.

Although this word is used in the *Pali Tipiṭaka* many times, it is not in the sense of *attā* (*ātman*) of the Brahmanic or Upanisadic thinking, but only for conventional usage of self. So also the word *ajjhattika* (*adhyātmika*) is not concerned with supreme soul or in any spiritual sense. This is only a conventional expression for the 'inside of the body', 'belonging to the body', 'regarding the body'.

It seems that Buddha had no objection in the use of the word *atta* or *attanīya*, but he had objection only to its characteristics of its being permanent, stable, unchangeable, eternal entity. Buddha clearly denied the existence of any

permanent *attā*. Division of person in five aggregates and the theory of dependent origination supported the theory of denial of *attā*.

Abbreviations

Bṛh = *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*
D.N. = *Dīgha Nikāya*
Kaṭh. = *Kaṭhopaniṣad*
M.N. = *Majjhima Nikāya*
M.V. = *Mahāvagga*
Muṇḍ = *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*
S.N. = *Saṁyutta Nikāya*
Sum. = *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*

Notes

1. *brahma vā idamagra āsīta tadātmānamevāvedahaṁ brahmāsmīti tasmāttat sarvamabhavat.../ Bṛh.*, I-4.10, p.79.
2. cf. *Bṛh.*, III-9.26, p.99; IV-2.4, p.102; IV-4.22, p.107; IV-5.15, p.109.
3. *sa vā ayamātmā sarveṣaṁ bhūtānāmadhipatiḥ...../.* Ibid. II-5.15, p.89.
4. *na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścinnāyaṁ kutaścinna babhūva kaścit / ajo nityaḥ śāśvatoayaṁ purāṇo na hanyate hanyamane śarīre // Kaṭh.*, II-18, p.6.
5. *aṇoraṇīyānmahato mahīyānātmāsya...../. Kaṭh.*, II-20, p.6.
   Bṛhacca taddivyamacintyarūpaṁ sūkṣmācca tatsūkṣmataraṁ vibhāti / ...// Muṇḍ., II-1.7, p.17.
6. *ātmānaṁ rathinaṁ viddhi śarīraṁ rathameva tu / buddhiṁ tu sārathiṁ viddhi manaḥ pragrahameva ca // indriyāṇi hayānāhurviṣayāṅsteṣu gocarān / āmendriyamanoyuktaṁ bhoktetyāhurmanīṣaṇaḥ // Kaṭh.*, I-3.3-4, p.6-7.
7. *yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavidyasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi/ ...// manomayaḥ prāṇaśarīranetā .../ Muṇḍ*, II-2.7, p.16.
8. *sarvavyāpinamātmānaṁ kṣīre sarpirivārpitaṁ / ātmavidyātapomūlaṁ tadbrahmopniṣatparaṁ .../ Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, I.16, p.122.
9. "*...tadapi tesaṁ bhavataṁ samaṇabrāhmaṇānaṁ ajānataṁ apassataṁ vedayitaṁ taṇhāgatānaṁ paritassitavipphanditameva. D.N.*, I-1, p.34.
10. Such things which are unworthy of attention, should not be thought of, e.g., "Was I in the past period, was I not, what was I, how was I in the past period; or shall I be, shall I not be, what shall I be in the future; or I am, I

am not, what am I, how am I, where does being come from and where will it go". "*ahosiṁ nu kho ahaṁ atītamaddhānaṁ? na nu ....? so kuhiṁgāmī bhavissatītī*"? *M.N.*, I-2, p.12.

11. Six wrong views are as - "There is self existing in me, there is self not existing in me, I recognize self as self, I recognize self as not-self, I recognize not self as self, the self which exists in me and which feels, experiences here and there the fruition of good or bad deeds, is permanent, stable, eternal and unchangeable". "*tassa evaṁ ayoniso manasikaroto channaṁ diṭṭhīnaṃ......ayaṁ atta nicco dhuvo sassato avipariṇāma-dhammo.................*" *M.N.*, I.2, p.12-13.
12. "*so idaṁ dukkhaṁ ti yonisomanasi karoti,.......tīni saṁyojanāni pahīyanti - sakkāyadiṭṭhi, vicikicchā, sīlabbataparāmāso*". *M.N.*, I.2, p.14.
13. "*.........? idhāvuso, assutavā puthujjano .... sappurisadhamme avinīto rūpaṁ attato samanupassati. rūpavantaṁ va attānaṁ attani vā rūpaṁ rūpasmiṁ vā attānaṁ ....* *M.N.*, III-38, p.310.
14. "*taṁ kiṁ maññasi, aggivessana, yaṁ tvaṁ evaṁ vadesi-'rūpaṁ me attā 'ti, vattati te tasmiṁ rūpe vaso-evaṁ me rūpaṁ hotu, evaṁ me rūpaṁ mā ahosī*" *ti. M.N.*, I.35, p.284.
15. Actually they meant by this the *rūpakkandha* (form aggregate) as *attā*. ("*appaṭisaṁvedano me attā ti iminā rūpakkhandhavatthukā.*" *Sum.*, II-2, p.204).
16. In this sense, they regard the perception, dispositions and consciousness as *attā* ("*attā me vediyati, vedanādhammo hi me attā ti iminā saññāsaṅ-khāraviññāṇakkhandhavatthukā*" *Sum.*, II-2, p.204).
17. *yonimanye prapadyante śarīratvāya dehinaḥ / sthāṇumaṇyeanusaṁyanti yathākarma yathāśrutam // Kaṭh.*, V.7, p.8.
    vāsāṁsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya, navāni gṛhṇāti naroaparāṇi / tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇanyanyāni saṁyāti navāni dehī //. Bhagavad-Gītā, II-22, p.101.
18. "*viññāṇam ca hi, Ānanda, mātukucchismiṁ na okkamissatha api nu ko nāmarūpaṁ mātukucchismiṁ samuccissathā*" *ti? D.N.*, II-2, p.50.
19. "*kataṁ taṁ, Sāti, viññāṇaṁ ti? yvāyaṁ, Bhante, vado vedeyyo tatra tatra kalyāṇapāpakānaṁ kammānaṁ vipākaṁ paṭisaṁvedetī*" *ti. M.N.*, I-38, 317.
20. Cf. *S.N.*, II-12.35, p.52; 12.36, p.54.
21. Cf. *S.N.*, II-12.12, p.13-14.
22. Cf. *S.N.*, II-12.17, p.19; II-12.46, p.64.
23. Cf. *S.N.*, II-12.17, p.19; 12.18, p.21.
24. "*nāyaṁ, bhikkhave, kāyo tumhākaṁ na pi aññesaṁ. purāṇamidaṁ, bhikkhave, kammaṁ abhisaṅkhataṁ.......*" *S.N.*, II-12.37, p.55.

25. *taṁ kiṁ maññatha vo, kumārā, kataṁ nu kho tumhākaṁ varaṁ - yaṁ va tumhe itthiṁ gaveseyyatha, yaṁ va attānaṁ gaveseyyāthā ti?... amhākaṁ varaṁ yaṁ mayaṁ attānaṁ gaveseyyāmā ti. M.V.*, I.13, p.25.
26. *tasmātihānanda, attadīpā viharatha attasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā, dhammadīpā dhammasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā.............* . *D.N.*, II-3, p.80; *S.N.*, III-22.43, p.274.

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THE ELUSIVE BUDDHIST SELF: PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS ON ITS DENIAL

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> The Venerable Ānanda sat next to the Blessed One and addressed him: "Reverend Master, I have heard it said again and again 'the world is empty, the world is empty.' But in what sense is it said that the world is empty?" "Ānanda, it is because it is empty of self and of anything belonging to self that the world is said to be empty."[1]

1. Introductory

The question of what exactly is the referent of the Buddhist denial of self continues to baffle the outside critical observer. The question has a long pedigree in Asia, where it was a fundamental and divisive issue among Buddhists. But it has also a long history in the West, where, closely allied to the question of "the meaning of nirvāṇa," it has produced a substantial literature. The western pedigree of the "no-self question" carries us from the times when it was assumed that the object of the "Buddhist" denial was the Upaniṣadic self (or Self with a capital according to one convention) through the times when some argued for a Buddhist Self (also capitalized).[2] The history of the debate has taken some new twists in more recent, and by far more sophisticated analyses (Collins 1982 & 1994; Oetke 1988; Tillemans 1996).

The consensus among western scholars points in the direction of a variety of Buddhist positions, and questions the wisdom (and ultimately the usefulness) of attempting to know what the original teaching may have been. Collins (1994) and Tillemans (1996) have examined this spectrum of conclusions.

In the present essay, I would like to add two more qualifications, exploring them briefly in light of selected Nikāya and Āgama texts. The hypotheses proposed in this paper are extensions or particular applications of the principle that was expressed by Collins with regards to the constructions of self generally. Collins (1994, p. 67) argues that "[o]ne might say that human beings are articulated conceptually as agents, by themselves and in relation to each other, in different ways, in different discourses." The hypotheses can also be construed as two theoretical qualifications to the quest for the Buddhist non-self. Both qualifications raise the question of what may have been the "self" or "selves" that were the object of the Buddhist critique.

First, I propose that different Buddhist voices may interact among themselves and with non-Buddhist voices in ways that are not necessarily linear. This would mean that the terms "self" and "no-self" are not univocal. Buddhists and non-Buddhists could interact in polemics without assuming a single notion of self. Likewise, doctrinal experts and philosophers may argue for a propositional no-self, yet assume and propound other types of no-self—social, ethical, etc. These other notions of self and no-self are not necessarily linked to the ontology expressed or implied by the Buddhist philosophical critique.[3]

Second, the contemporary scholar's view of the Buddhist no-self presupposes notions (explicit or implicit) of what may have been the Buddhist notions of the self that is the object of the denial. These western preconceptions cannot be separated easily from our own notions of what is self. And, yet, we do not have a single set of such notions. We have, for instance, major differences of culture, class, and individual character that affect so-called "western notions of the self." The elusiveness and ambiguity of English selflessness, for instance, has been mentioned repeatedly in the scholarly literature. As still other examples of the problem one may mention the fact that Romance languages, for instance, have no simple, much less a natural, set of grammatical categories to distinguish self from "I." Contemporary English, colloquial and psychological, usage of words like "self," "ego," "inner self," and "identity,"is equally problematic. The picture becomes even more confusing if we also consider words like "soul," "spirit," "personality," and "mind." All of these words have a privileged status in North American and British folk metaphysics and in the construction of the English-speaker's "selfimage" (if I may be allowed to incur in my own brand of obscurantism to make a rhetorical point).

However, slippage and confusion is not the privileged territory of the English speaker. Nor is the rhetorical or polemic exploitation of this slippage a new thing. Consider for instance a key passage in Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (La Vallée Poussin, 1914) Chapter IX, stanzas 68-71). What superficially may appear to be an argument against "the" notion of "self," turns out to be actually, against "one" particular notion of self—and one that is clearly tied to folk usage.

The passage in question is directed at the Nyāya- Vaiśeṣika notion of the 'I'—a notion that is far from intuitive to a western observer. In the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika view, the "I" is a non-conscious, unchanging nonmaterial entity. It is under most circumstances "associated" with cognition (or consciousness), but it is not always conscious. This is, in fact, a very reasonable hypothesis. It is problematic to western folk notions only because it opens the door to the possibility of identity apart from awareness (as I would argue any theory of the self would have to assume).

Śāntideva's Buddhist critique does not bother to go into the subtleties of the phenomenology of self and identity. It attacks the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika position with typical *prāsaṅgika* tactics:

> IX.68. Now, an unconscious [self, such as the pure "soul" you posit,] cannot be an "I," because it is unconscious like a rag or some other [insentient object]. If on the other hand [you propose] that [this soul] cognizes through a close connection to consciousness, [then] it would follow that when it is not cognizing it is dead.

This attack is directed at the problems inherent in a non-conscious self. But Buddhist critics also find fault in the notion of an unchanging self (in fact they may find fault in almost any notion of an unchanging entity). One typical way of arguing this point is to question the possibility of a conjunction of immutability and agency. In this case Śāntideva argues by assuming that consciousness is a form of agency, and hence a form of change, which is incompatible with the notion of an unchanging self:

> IX.69. If on the other hand the self is something that does not change at all, then what can consciousness do for it? [If it were as you propose,] then one could likewise think that empty space, which is unconscious and inactive, has what it takes to be a self.

The next two stanzas raise the issue of agency explicitly—the shift into this topic suggesting how close awareness and action-mutability are in the Buddhist view of self. The stanzas can be translated as follows:

> IX.70. If [the opponent argues that] without a self the connection between action and its fruits would not be possible, [we say this is not the case] because who would possess [then] the fruit if [the doer] dies after he has carried out the action?

Finally, Śāntideva introduces the argument that seems to me most insightful: to describe "self" accurately one must attribute to this entity a fluidity and discontinuity that is, in the end, perfectly consistent with the Buddhist view of what self is (or is not):

> IX.71. Moreover, we both agree that action and fruit have separate locations, and you think that the self is inactive. Is this polemic then not pointless?

These are all specific arguments against a particular conception of the "self." And, as we have seen, here "self" and "I" seem to be conflated. But, are all Buddhists at all times referring to this self? Can these arguments apply to any conception of self?

I believe the answer to both questions is "no." And this is part of the problem with attempting to understand the notion of no-self from a limited philosophical analysis of particular *śāstric* presentations.[4] Before we conclude that Buddhists have traditionally engaged in a deceptive game of spurious arguments about an obscure metaphysical category we need to ask ourselves if Buddhists are not denying something more than the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika abstraction.

2. Empty of Self

Like Śāntideva's passage, "classical" or "canonical" passages (that is the arguments of *suttas* and *sūtras)*[5] have a polemical context, or a set of contexts. However, these contexts are more elusive than those of the śāstric passages—in part because we lack external evidence of their contexts, in part because the Nikāya and Āgama contexts present both redactional and situational complexity.[6] Nevertheless, I would like to propose that we can reach a reasonable degree of understanding by looking at the suggested situational context as well as at the wording of various statements on self and no-self. I also propose that we can increase the clarity of our understanding (or at least of our ignorance) by examining some of our own cultural and personal presuppositions about self and no-self.

The fragment quoted in the epigraph suggests one way in which the classical texts define "self" and what is not self. The passage appears to be defining the extension of the term "empty" *(suñña)* as it applies to "world" *(loka).* The passage is part of a short sutta titled Suññaloka-sutta, which in fact follows immediately after the Palokadhamma-sutta in which the question of what is meant by "world" is explained by a pun between "world" *(loka)* and "decay" *(paloca).*

But in the Suññaloka-sutta quoted in the epigraph we are told that the world is empty because it is empty of self and of anything belonging to self. The sutta then asks, "but what is it that is empty of self and of what belongs to self?" *(kiñca ānanda, suññaṃ attena vā attaniyena vā).* The text continues, adding what is best construed as its own commentary (SN, IV.54):

> The visual organ, Ānanda, is empty of self and of anything belonging to self. Visible forms are empty of self and of anything belonging to self. Visual consciousness is empty of self and of anything belonging to self. Visual contact is

> empty of self and of anything belonging to self. And whatever arises in dependence on or conditioned by visual contact *(yampidaṃ cakkhu-samphassa-paccayā uppajjati),* whether it is experienced as pleasurable or painful, or as neutral, that too is empty of self and of anything belonging to self.

Needless to say, exactly the same statements are made regarding the remaining dimensions of awareness and self-awareness that constitute the list of phenomena we have come to designate as the eighteen "elements" or "sense bases" (for lack of any reasonable English equivalent for the Indian term *dhātu).*

Now, is this passage something more than a denial of the ontological proposition "there is a substantial self underneath each and every one of these facts of awareness"? I believe the last sentence in the paragraph should be read as the culmination of the paragraph: agency and possession are misconceptions of our relationship to pleasurable, painful, and neutral feelings and sensations. If this is the way it should be read, then the passage is in fact something more than the denial of an ontological proposition. It is also stating that there is a problem in our notions of agency and possession. As we shall see presently, the problem is in good measure due to our false attribution of agency and possession to things that lack both capacities, and in the behaviors that result when we act on this false attribution.

This interpretation is reinforced by a short text following immediately after the Suññaloka-sutta. This text is appropriately titled "Summary of Dharma" (Saṅkhittadhamma-sutta),[7] as it presents in summary or outline form the traditional argument for the "denial of the self." This is an outline or bare-bones version of the main argument of the so-called "Second Sermon," labeled Anattalakkhaṇa-sutta by the commentarial tradition. The Saṅkhittadhamma-sutta version of this classical argument reads (SN, IV.54):[8]

> "What do you think, Ānanda, is the eye permanent or impermanent?"[9]
>
> "Impermanent, Reverend Master."
>
> "But, that which is impermanent, is it painful or pleasurable?"
>
> "It is painful, Reverend Master."
>
> "But, that which is impermanent, painful, bound to change *(vipariṇāmadhamma),* is it reasonable to regard it *(kallan nu samanupassituṃ)* in this manner: 'this is mine, I am this, this is my self' ?" *(etaṃ mama, eso 'ham asmi, eso me attā).*
>
> "No, it is not so, Revered Master."

The passage concludes by stating categorically that "that which is impermanent, painful, bound to change" cannot be "self." Yet, the passage is also implying

(and here is where the proponents of a Buddhist self have missed the subtlety of the argument) that everything that we could possibly regard as self is nothing but this self of suffering.

Even if we consider this general self of suffering as an entity defined by some sort of philosophical argument, we see that it is established by an argument about human action and human expectations as much as by arguments about ontology. This is suggested by some of the variant *pericopes* that may be regarded as various versions of the same *logion* at the core of the "Second Sermon."[10] Consider for instance another formulation from *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (SN, 111.82-83):

> Bodily form, monks, is impermanent. That which is impermanent is painful. That which is painful is not self. One should regard that which is not a self for what it truly is *(yathābhūtaṃ),* with an accurate discernment *(sammappaññāya),* in this manner: "this is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self" *(netaṃ mama, neso 'ham asmi, na me 'so attā).*[11]

Exactly the same formula is then, predictably, applied to the remaining four *skandhas.*[12] Although statements of this sort can be, and have been read as tantamount to a reduction of the self to the skandhas, the argument is not constructed exclusively on the analysis of self or person into these five "aggregates."[13]

The fourth volume of the Pāli Text Society edition of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (SN, IV.1) begins with a sūtra titled the Ajjhattānicca-sutta:[14]

> The visual organ, monks, is impermanent. That which is impermanent is painful. That which is painful is not self. One should regard that which is not a self for what it truly is *(yathābhūtaṃ),* with an accurate discernment *(sammappaññāya),* in this manner: "this is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self" *(netaṃ mama, neso 'ham asmi, na me 'so attā).*

Thus, it is not just the skandhas, but the whole field of what we experience as self and through self. The formulaic argument is applied to other categories of phenomena in a Sāṃkhya like enumeration. Such enumerations, however, are not the only way in which the close connection between self and suffering is established.

One of several suttas titled "Samiddhi-sutta" in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* presents a passage that is reminiscent of the passage in the epigraph, and seems to belong to a similar subgenre (SN, IV.39):[15]

> He sat next to the Blessed One and addressed him: "Reverend Master, I have heard it said again and again, 'sentient beings, sentient beings.' But, what sort of thing is a sentient being, or what is meant by this concept 'sentient being'?"
>
> Samiddhi where you find a visual organ, where you find visual form, visual consciousness, and phenomena to be cognized by visual consciousness *(cakkhuviññānaviññātabbā dhammā),* there you will find a sentient being or the conception of a sentient being *(sattapaññatti).*

But the text continues:

> And, furthermore, Samiddhi, where you find no visual organ, where you find no visual form, no visual consciousness, and no phenomena to be cognized by visual consciousness, there you will find no sentient being nor the concept of a sentient being.

This is all followed by a long passage (IV.39-40) defining in similar fashion suffering *(dukkha)* and world *(loka).* The proximity of these passages and the similarity in structure suggests that "self," "sentient being," "world," and "suffering" are near synonyms. Similarly, the notion of no-self must then involve a critique of certain constructions of the world and its connection to personal awareness, and to constructions of felicity and infelicity, as well.

The self that is being denied is something more than an ontological or metaphysical "self." It is, of course, a vague notion of "I," or "what I am," and it is the vague sense in which we all, since childhood, experience ourselves as "a sentient thing," and hence begin to experience "our self" as a separate, sentient being. But this self is also specifically the "I" of suffering and being in the world, the "I" of certain forms of sentience: pleasure and desire, pain and revulsion. The śāstric critiques only scratch the surface of this much more complex notion of self.

3. Suspicions of a Self

The following text contains further variations of the two common logia I have been discussing so far. As already noted, these are traditionally identified as part of the Second Sermon delivered by the Buddha after his enlightenment, presumably after the Sermon on the Four Noble Truths and also at the Deer Park in Benares. This version raises interesting issues regarding what some Buddhists may have considered to be the characteristics of "self."[16]

The setting was in Benares, at the Deer Park.[17] At that time, the Blessed One addressed the group of the five monks. He said this:[18] "The body, monks, is not self.[19] If the body, monks, were self, it would not bring pain, and one would be able to will, with respect to the body, 'let my body be like this, let my body not be like this.' But since the body, monks, is not self, therefore, it brings pain, and one is not able to will, with respect to the body, 'let my body be like this, let my body not be like this.'"[20]

As can be easily predicted, the text then proceeds to make exactly the same claims regarding the other four aggregates (skandhas): sensations, thoughts and conceptions, habitual tendencies, and consciousness.[21] All of these are not self.

The passage implies a close connection between self on the one hand, and will and absence of pain on the other. By implication there is also a necessary connection between that which is not self, and pain and lack of control. Thus, one can say that anything that one could identify as self or part of self "is not self," and this is why "it brings pain, and one is not able to will, with respect to [it], 'let [it] be like this, let [it] not be like this.' "

The text continues with the chain of arguments mentioned above in the outline or summary presentations of the Second Sermon:

"Now, what do you think, monks? Is the body permanent or impermanent?"[22]

"It is impermanent, Venerable one."

"And what is impermanent, is that happiness or is it suffering?"

"Suffering, Venerable One."

"What is impermanent, suffering, unstable by nature, is it fitting to regard it thus: 'this is mine, I am this, this is my self?'[23]

"Surely it is not, Venerable One."

"So also it is with sensations, thoughts and conceptions, habitual tendencies, and consciousness.[24]

"Therefore, monks, whatever is body, be it past, future or present, internal or external, obvious or subtle, base or refined, far or near, it all should be perceived with right discernment, as it really is: namely, 'this is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.'"[25]

Again predictably, the text then applies the same argument to "sensations, thoughts and conceptions, habitual tendencies, and consciousness."[26] For all of the skandhas, absence of control is tantamount to absence of self. But control is not

achieved by restoring some notion of self, rather it is established by the practice of the Path *(mārga)*:

> "Seeing in this manner, monks, the learned noble disciple turns away from body, turns away from sensations, turns away from thoughts and conceptions, turns away from habitual tendencies, turns away from consciousness. As he turns away he becomes dispassionate; when he becomes dispassionate, he becomes free; and when he is free, he knows 'I am free.' And thus he discerns clearly: destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived fully, the task has been accomplished, in this state there is no hereafter."[27]
>
> In this manner did the Blessed One speak. The five monks were elated,[28] and they applauded the words of the Blessed One.
>
> And, as this sermon was being delivered the minds of the five monks grasped no more at existence and became free from any growth in future karma.[29]

Unless this passage hides a subtle notion of self, we must assume that control and agency are therefore possible even if there is no self to be found anywhere. We must also assume that complete control is only possible in the Path. One can easily see why some may have been led to assume a Buddhist belief in a higher self: the Path and its practice bring about everything that has been declared to be absent from that which is not self. The similarities between a self and the Path and its goal are in a few simple claims: that the Path is agency and control, that it is the only sphere of existence in which the will corresponds to a realistic goal, and that it leads to felicity and freedom from suffering.

4. Agency and Freedom

The last paragraphs of the above sutta can be ignored as so much filling, or they can be read as witnesses to an important context of the no-self debate. Although it is possible (and arguably legitimate) to separate the skeleton argument from its religious context, it is also true that it usually occurs embedded in a particular form of religious discourse. It is not the rhetoric of selflessness (in the contemporary English sense), but the rhetoric of self-cultivation. Hence the paradox: no-self (absence of the presumed unchanging agent) is very much about self (agency, freedom, felicity).

We have already seen that no-self is about self control. But it is also about awareness, knowledge, and purity. This is seen in numerous passages, but is espe-

cially clear in the use of stock phrases in a classical formulation of the so-called three signs of the Buddha Dharma (they happen to be four in many of the variant versions). These occur (as four) in the *Udānavarga,* for instance. One Central Asian manuscript of this text presents an interconnected argument that is reminiscent of the canonical account of the Second Sermon.'[30] This variant reads as follows:[31]

XII.5. When one sees with discernment
that all compounded things are impermanent,
then one becomes free from suffering.[32]
This is the path to purification.
XII.6. When one sees with discernment
that everything impermanent leads to suffering,
then one becomes free from suffering.
This is the path to purification.
XII.7. . . .[33]
XII.8. When one sees with discernment
that everything that is suffering is without a self,
then one becomes free from suffering.
This is the path to purification.

The passage parallels the reasoning expressed in the Second Sermon. But it also reinforces the doctrinal frames seen elsewhere by using stock phrases from other contexts. For instance, "sees with discernment" may be construed as a metrical variant of "by means of true discernment." The phrase "then one becomes free from suffering" is a variant of "when he becomes dispassionate, he becomes free"—especially given the ambiguity of the Sanskrit expression. "This the path to purification" reminds us not only of the centrality of path, but also of the fact that no-self and self have much to do with ascetic self-cultivation, renunciation, and sainthood.

But one should note that in this passage two things change in the location and structuring of the argument. First, the argument is not exactly the same as the argument presented earlier,[34] and second the frame tends to be more repetitive than in other locations. It is as if self, suffering, and impermanence (and, of course, emptiness), were direct links to impurity, and the opposite of right awareness. The passage suggests an interconnection between impermanence, suffering, and self, and their close links within a network that includes purity/impurity, freedom/bondage, and knowledge/ignorance (or unawareness). This is a net of meanings that can be instantiated in almost any canonical passage. This is done masterfully in the following passage from the Chinese version of the *Saṃyukta Āgama* [*Taishō, ii,* #99(262), 66b-c]. This sūtra represents a different version or transmission of the

doctrine expressed in the preceding selections; it corresponds to the Channa-sutta of *Saṃyutta Nikāya, III*, 132-135.[35] Like its Pāli parallel, this sūtra represents several voices. First, there is Channa, the seeker. Second, we meet the monks who first instruct him (presented as if they represent the surface meaning of the Second Sermon). Third are the two intermediaries: Ānanda (who would be the spokesperson for the Buddha himself), and Katyāyana (who appears both as intermediary, and perhaps as pretext to introduce the logion that is being used here as scriptural commentary).[36] Finally, the sutta refers to, or is in part directed at a non-Buddhist world that grasps at systems and views of existence.[37]

> Thus have I heard. At one time a large congregation of elder monks were staying in the Deer Park at Ṛṣivadana in the kingdom of Benares. The Buddha had already attained his parinirvāṇa. At that time the elder Channa early in the morning dressed himself in his robe, picked up his bowl, and went begging for alms food in the city of Benares. After he had his meal, he returned, put away his [upper] robe and his bowl, and washed his feet. Then he took his door key and went from hermitage to hermitage, and from cell to cell, and to every place where monks were doing their aftermeal walking meditation. And to every monk [he encountered] he pleaded and asked: "Please instruct me. Please teach me the Dharma. Please let me know and see the Dharma, that I may know according to the Dharma, that I may perceive according to the Dharma."
>
> Then every monk told Channa: "The body is impermanent. Sensations, thoughts and conceptions, habitual tendencies, and consciousness are impermanent. All compounded things are impermanent. All dharmas are without a self. Nirvana is peace."[38]
>
> Channa replied to each one of these monks: "I already know this, that the body is impermanent, that sensations, thoughts and conceptions, habitual tendencies, and consciousness are impermanent, that all compounded things are impermanent, that all dharmas are without a self, that nirvana is peace." But Channa also said, "Still I find no joy in hearing this, that all compounded things are empty, and at peace. I am unable to attain the extinction of craving, the abandonment of desire, nirvana. In this state, how will I know or see so that I can say 'In this way I know, in this way I see'?"

This statement is crucial. Channa is not satisfied with a pat answer. He is not satisfied by a repetition of a doctrine he has heard before, because this doctrine has not had the expected transforming effect. He therefore challenges the authority of his teachers and asks for a competent teacher:

A second and a third time he asked this question. Channa then asked, "Who has the capacity here to teach me the Dharma so that I may know the Dharma and see the Dharma?"

And he then thought, "The venerable Ānanda is now staying in the Kingdom of Kauśambī, in the park at Ghoṣilāra[ma].[39] He venerated the World Honored one and loved him faithfully. He was one praised by the Buddha and respected by all those who lead the holy life. He most certainly will be able to teach me the Dharma, so that I may know the Dharma, so that I may see the Dharma."

In this manner Channa decides to seek Ānanda. He gathers his things and travels to Kauśambī. There he meets Ānanda and tells him of his quest and his disappointment.

"[E]very monk told me, '... All compounded things are impermanent. All dharmas are without a self. Nirvana is peace.' And to each one of them I replied, 'I already know this,...' But I also said, 'Still I find no joy in hearing this, that all compounded things are empty, and at peace. I am unable to attain the extinction of craving, the abandonment of desire, nirvana. In this state, how will I know or see so that I can say 'In this way I know, in this way I see'? ... Indeed it would be good, venerable Ānanda, if you instructed me and taught me the Dharma so that I may know the Dharma and see the Dharma."

And then the venerable Ānanda said to Channa: "Wonderful, Channa. I am greatly pleased. I rejoice that a man of benevolence [speaks] so frankly in front of those who lead the holy life of the monk, [thus] defeating falsehood and deceit. Channa, it is the foolish common man who is not able to understand that the body is impermanent, that sensations, thoughts and conceptions, habitual tendencies, and consciousness are impermanent, that all compounded things are impermanent, that all dharmas are without a self, that nirvana is peace. You are now fit to grasp the supreme and subtle Dharma. Now listen attentively. I will explain it to you."

Then it occurred to Channa, "I am now overjoyed that I will obtain the supreme and subtle Dharma. My heart leaps with joy for I am now fit to grasp the supreme and subtle Dharma."

Then Ānanda spoke thus to Channa: "This I heard directly from the Buddha, as he explained it to Mahā-Katyāyana:[40] 'People of the world are confused and upset because they rely on two extremes—being and nonbeing. People of the world grasp at all the sense fields, and their mind hankers after

them, becomes attached to them. Katyāyana, if one does not hold on to an 'I,' does not grasp at an 'I,' does not dwell in it, and does not hanker after it, then [one knows] it is [only] sorrow that arises when [sorrow] arises and ceases when it ceases. Katyāyana, [one who knows this] has no doubt or hesitation about this; relying on no one else, this person is able to know by himself. This is called seeing correctly what the Tathagata has taught."

In first parts of the sūtra the text weaves many of the themes already noted elsewhere in the Pāli *Saṃyutta Nikāya.* The last paragraph weaves in a new theme: not grasping at any idea of an "I." Now one last loose end remains: the connection between "self" and world. This is explained with another classical formula:

"Why is this so? Katyāyana, if one sees correctly, as things truly are, the coming to be of the world, then one does not give rise to the view of the non-existence of the world. If one sees correctly, as things truly are, the coming to be of the world, then one does not give rise to the view of the existence of the world. Katyāyana, the Tathagata, abandoning both extremes, teaches a Middle Way, namely, 'When that cause exists, this arises; when that is born, this is born. That is to say, by depending on [the arising of] ignorance karmic conditioning arises, and so forth down to the arising of birth, old age, illness, and death—of the whole mass of grasping, affliction, and sorrow. And also, that when that cause does not exist, this does not arise; when that ceases, this ceases. That is to say, if ignorance ceases, karmic conditioning ceases, and so forth down to the cessation of birth, old age, illness, and death—of the whole mass of grasping, affliction, and sorrow.' "

This is, in a nutshell, the "ontological Middle Way": neither being nor non-being, but causal connection. This classical statement does not need much commentary, except to note that here it is supposed to expand or complete two other canonical formulae. It completes first canonical statements encapsulated in the three (or four) marks: impermanent, painful, no-self, at peace in nirvana. And it completes the canonical statements about not holding on to any idea of an "I".

5. Towards a Conclusion

The narrative context of the passage should not be taken lightly. It is no mere pre-text—rather, it is a statement of the religious motivations or meanings of the elusive self-less-ness that seems to confuse us so much. The typical "stock phrases" that conclude the story are also, in my opinion, central to the way in which this text

locates "being without a self." It is therefore worthwhile ending with the final sections of the sūtra, the part that one is most likely to ignore if one assumes that such statements are merely ornaments.

First we are told that Channa has "attained the Dharma":

> When the venerable Ānanda had explained the Dharma in this manner, Channa the monk left behind the impurity of the world and abandoned the dust of the world, and he was able to purify the eye of Dharma.
>
> Then at that time Channa the monk saw the Dharma, attained the Dharma, knew the Dharma, gave rise to the Dharma. He surpassed all doubts. Without relying on another, he gained the fearlessness of a great teacher who teaches the Dharma.

Naturally, this is not simply an internal event, a philosophical understanding, but a personal transformation that prompts both a deep gratitude towards the teacher, and a sense of personal joy in which both teacher and disciple share:

> And he paid his respects to the Venerable Ānanda with joined palms, and addressed him, saying, "Indeed it is as you say. Such is [your] wisdom and [your] practice of the holy life. [You are] a benevolent virtuous friend teaching, imparting instruction, and preaching the Dharma. I have now heard from the venerable Ānanda the Dharma with respect to all compounded things—that they are all empty, at rest and unattainable. Grasping has been extinguished, passion has been abandoned, brought to rest and extinguished in nirvana. [My] mind rejoices, and dwells correctly in liberation. There is [for me] no more returning to the cycle [of rebirth]. I no longer see an 'I.' I only see the true Dharma."
>
> Then Ānanda said to Channa: "You now have obtained the greatest good. With respect to the most profound Dharma of the Buddha you have obtained the holy wisdom eye."
>
> Then the two masters displayed great joy. They arose from their seats and each returned to his dwelling place.

This all-too-common frame is easily missed precisely because it is so common. But it is an integral part of the wider context of no-self notions and practices upon which the philosophical debates are often (although admittedly not always) projected. This broader context includes parallel and opposing themes of selfhood and non-selfhood, and of selfhood defined as the absence of certain specific notions of self. Such themes include ascetic motifs of renunciation and self-effacement, ab-

stention and self-sacrifice, affective models or ideals that result in paradigms for human attitudes and public manifestations of emotion, and ways of viewing the world and the self. These dimensions of self and no-self are spread along a broad range of issues that may be termed the contextual semiotics of self: what self signifies in specific contexts.

What each of these dimensions of no-self might mean, and the many variants they may have, are topics in need of further explorations. Also in need of further reflection is the question of whether or not any of these models can be realized in practice. These are all issues that intertwine with the philosophical question of what the self or no-self might be, or with the philosophical question of what it would mean to "have no self." However, the latter questions cannot be answered satisfactorily without a better understanding than the one we now possess of the contextual semiotics of no-self.

Appendix

Anatta-suttas

1. Anatta-sutta. SN, III.196. In the definitional genre illustrated above ("No-self, no-self," it is said. What sort of thing is "no-self"?). Preceded by three other short suttas on, respectively, impermanent, by nature impermanent, and suffering.

2. Anatta-sutta. SN, III.199. This is in fact two short suttas: that which is not self must be abandoned, and that which is by nature not self *(anatta-dhamma)* must be abandoned. Preceded by two pairs of similar short suttas on, respectively, impermanent, and suffering.

3. Anatta-sutta. SN, III.201. The same as number 2.

4. Anatta-sutta. SN, V.133. On the cultivation of the mental representation of no-self *(anattasaññā)*. [In some redactions this sutta is known as Dukkhe anatta-sutta. In the Sinhala BJT it is presented in six variant versions.]

5. Anatta-sutta. SN, III.78. One should abandon desire for that which is not self (which is no-self). Preceded by two similar short suttas on, respectively, impermanent, and suffering. [Number 5 is not recognized by Malalasekera.]

6. Anattaniya-sutta. SN, III.78. One should abandon desire for that which "does not belong to self."[41]

7a. Anattalakkhaṇa-sutta. Vin, I.13-14. This is the sutta recognized by the commentaries as "the Second Sermon," and the Anattalakkhaṇa-sutta proper. [Malalasekera counts this and the following as a single text, although they are not identical.]

7b. Pañca-sutta. SN, III.66-67. A variant of 7a, with a different frame, and lacking part of the argument of 7a.

7. Anattā-sutta. SN, III.21. As in the Udānavarga, no-self is seen as implying something that must be avoided or something that must cause revulsion leading to dispassion, and by dispassion to liberation. Preceded by two similar short suttas on, respectively, impermanent, and suffering. In all three, the topic is the five skandhas.

8. Anattā-sutta. SN, III.77. Similar to number *5* above.

9. Anattā-sutta. SN, IV.2,4,6. Actually four separate suttas representing three variants of two stock phrases: the syllogistic chain of the Second Sermon and the formula of dispassion. The three variants consist in the application of these formulas to the sense organs, the sense objects, the sense organs in the past and the future, and the sense objects in the past and the future.

10. Anattā-sutta. SN, IV.28. "All" is no-self, and "all" means all the dhātus.

11. Anattena-sutta. SN, III.178. Actually three short variants of a single stock phrase recommending the abandonment of desire, passion, and both desire and passion towards that which is no-self. Preceded by two sets of similar short suttas on, respectively, that which is impermanent, and that which is painful (suffering).

Notes

1. Saṃyutta Nikāya (henceforth SN), IV.54. All references within the main body of the text and in the notes are to the standard title of classical works or, in the case of contemporary works of scholarship, to the last name of the author fol-

lowed by the publication date as listed in the Bibliography at the end of this article. Abbreviations are noted on their first occurrence and are also listed at the end of the article. All translations of Pāli texts are from the Pāli Text Society edition. In this passage, and in similarly structured passages below, constructions of the type "Reverend Master, I have heard it said again and again 'the world is empty, the world is empty.'" are free renderings of the Indian structure: "Reverend Master, it is said, 'the world is empty, the world is empty.'"

2. Much of this literature has been reviewed and justly criticized by Collins (1982). The most recent advocates of the Buddhist self (or qualified self) have been Bhattacharya (1973) and Pérez Remon (1980). The problem may be more complicated than a simple choice between self and no-self. The question is of course what sort of self? And this question needs to be answered in a manner that is something more than a consideration of metaphysical propositions. For a movement in this direction, see Collins (1994), and the papers in Carrithers, Collins, & Lukes (1985). Of course, we still don't know for sure whether or not at least some of the early Buddhist critiques of ātman were directed at the advocates of Upaniṣadic doctrines.
3. In spite of its focus on one body of literature, the reader will detect the instability of the concepts of self and no-self. As philosophical extensions of a pronoun with a wide range of discourse functions, "self" and "no-self" are fluid concepts. Their fluidity will become obvious from their changing position in the passages that follow, as well as from the uncertainty of the English translations ("myself," "my self," "no-self," "non-self," "not self," etc.).
4. The word "śāstric" is my neologism for that category of Indian Buddhist writings and arguments that were traditionally classified under the rubric of Sanskrit *śāstra.* It is meant to avoid the limitations of "philosophical" and "scholastic."
5. Pāli and Sanskrit words are only italicized on their first occurrence.
6. A rough sense of the redactional issues can be had by comparing the passages considered in the present article with a list of *Saṃyutta Nikāya* suttas whose titles begin with the words *anatta* and *anattā.* Such a list is presented in the Appendix and is in part based on Malalasekera's (1937) *Dictionary of proper names.* Although the list is somewhat arbitrary (the present article already demonstrates that a list of titles is no guide to the thematic content of the texts), it serves to illustrate the ways in which the pericopes analyzed here were used by the redactors of this Nikāya.
7. Literally: "Sūtra on the Summarized Dharma."

8. The text, which recurs repeatedly, especially in *Saṃyutta Nikāya,* reads: Taṃ kiṃ maññasi ānanda, cakkhuṃ niccaṃ vā aniccaṃ vāti? Aniccaṃ bhante. Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vāti? Dukkhaṃ bhante. Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāmadhammaṃ kallan nu taṃ samanupassituṃ: "etaṃ mama, eso 'ham asmi, eso me attā" ti? No hetaṃ bhante. (SN, IV.54)
9. The established translation for the term *anicca (anitya)* is misleading. The issue is not permanence, if by "permanent" one understands that which is "never ending." Rather, the question is whether that which we call "I" is something that abides or endures without change, hence, whether or not it is immutable. Furthermore, the notion of mutability is connected to the notion of rootedness *(ni-tya),* and by extension to metaphors of centeredness and foundationalism.
10. The terms "pericope" and "logion" (logia) are borrowed, naturally, from Biblical criticism. However, they are not meant to imply that I believe the logia are actual words of the Buddha. This is not an enterprise of the type pursued by scholars like those of "The Jesus Seminar." Rather, the words are borrowed to describe formal and contextual characteristics that suggest something about the materials used by the transmitters and redactors of Nikāya and Āgama material. Fragments and formulae that are used in a cut-and-paste fashion are called pericopes. Segments of discourse that are treated as self-contained units and as utterances of the Buddha are called logia. The distinction, of course, is often impossible to make.
11. The last clause like the rest of the passage matches the "standard" formula of the "Second Sermon" in the Mahāvagga, Vinaya, I.13-14: netaṃ mama, neso 'ham asmi, na me so attā. In this section of the Mahāvagga, a number of the pericopes that appear scattered and repeated in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* are woven into a single sermon that is similar to, but not identical with the Pañcasutta of SN, III.66-67.
12. As already noted, Pāli and Sanskrit words are only italicized on their first occurrence.
13. On should note, parenthetically, that the accusation of "reductionism" is not an argument against theories of no-self, unless one assumes there is a self. Since the self is not an empirical fact, the very notion of "reduction" is problematic in this context. Needless to say, reduction and reductionism are not synonymous. The classical canonical passage suggesting that the self can be "reduced" to the skandhas is SN, III.46: "Monk, those samanas and brahmanas who thoroughly examine and reflect on the self in all its many forms every one of them [only] examines and reflects on the five groups of grasping or one of the components of these [five groups]." Ye hi keci bhikkhave, samaṇā vā

brahmaṇā vā anekavihitaṃ attānaṃ samanupassamānā samanupassanti, sabbe te pañcupādānakkhandhe samanupapassanti, etesaṃ vā aññataraṃ. Cp. SN, III.42, and DN, II.66-68.

14. The term *ajjhatta* (Sanskrit *adhyātman)* means here "internal," that is, referring to human consciousness, not to the external or bodily behavior that can be observed by other persons.
15. The subgenre I would describe as a type of catechetic or abhidharmic recitation of questions and answers. This particular form is concentrated in the Fourth Book of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya.*
16. The translation is from the Pāli version in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya, III,* 66-68 *(i.2.1.7).* The sermon appears with some variants in a number of other locations in the canonical collections, for instance in the Pāli Vinaya (Mahāvagga, *Vinaya, 1,* 12-13) and in the *Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra* of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins. The common title for the second sermon, *Anattalakkhaṇa-sutta* ("The Sūtra on the Signs of No-self"), is not found in the Pāli Text Society versions of the *logia,* but it occurs in the Nālandā edition, where its presence may be due to editorial license. The title in the Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka Series electronic version (BJT) and in the Pāli Text Society edition is *Pañcavaggiya* and *Pañca,* "The Group of Five," and "The Five," referring to the five ascetics who were Buddha's first companions and disciples.
17. The present translation is from the Pāli Text Society edition, which may have taken this fascinating lead sentence from its base manuscript – the Burmese manuscript at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The Nālandā edition, which prefers Singhalese recensions, has the more conventional opening found in the Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti edition (BJT): "At one time the Blessed One was staying in Benares, in the Deer Park at Isipatana."
18. Instead of "He said this," the Nālandā and Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti editions have the following exchange: "Monks," he said. "Venerable one," replied the monks to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said: "The body, monks,..."
19. Naturally, the word *rūpa* is more than just the body. It is all perceivable form or material phenomena.
20. This pericope presents a variant on the syllogistic argument discussed in the previous section. Self is that over which we have perfect control.
21. Manuscripts, redactions, and editions adopt different conventions to abbreviate the stock phrases that are often repeated within a single sūtra (repetition or duplication occurring outside the boundaries of a single sūtra is seldom acknowledged). Modern editions frequently follow these conventions. But the Pāli Text Society edition is generally inconsistent (as perhaps are some of its sources), and sometimes abbreviates with sentence fragments or single words.

The Nālandā edition sometimes omits important phrases that appear in the Pāli Text Society edition. In the present case, the expansion of the argument to include all of the skandhas is abbreviated in all extant redactions.

22. This sentence begins a dialogue that appears as an independent pericope in a variety of contexts – e.g., *Saṃyutta Nikāya, 2,* 244-246.
23. The expression in quotation marks in the English rendering is "eso me attā" can be rendered as "this is my self," but may have been a shorter way of saying "this I am myself." See the note to the negative form of the expression below note 25.
24. This abbreviated repetition is not found in the Nālandā edition. The Pāli Text Society edition repeats the whole set of stock phrases only with respect to consciousness.
25. The expression "na me so attā" (found in all versions of this sutta) can be rendered with a literal English equivalent ("this is not my self"), but bolder and more free renderings are possible (e.g., "I don't have this self").
26. Again, the abbreviated repetition is not found in the same form in the various redactions. The Nālandā edition omits the abbreviated text altogether. The Pāli Text Society edition repeats the whole set of stock phrases only with respect to consciousness. The Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti electronic version repeats the passage for each one of the other four skandhas.
27. The phrase "holy life" is a free rendering of *brahmacaryā.* Here, as in a few other, but crucial contexts, associations with the concepts of brahman and Brahman are vague references to that which is holy, very much like the use of terms of class and ethnic nobility (e.g., *ārya*) are metaphors for moral nobility. The term *brahmacaryā,* as one of the stages in the life of a brahmin, refers to stage of spiritual discipleship, before marriage, and hence to a life of celibacy. In Buddhist contexts the term retains these connotations, so that the *brahmacaryā* is usually the life of the celibate ascetic – monk or wanderer.
28. Literally: "group of five was elated."
29. A free rendering for the technical term *āsrava* (Pāli: *āsava),* which is especially problematic. Etymologically, it appears to be from the root *ā-su-* (Sanskrit *ā-sru-),* "to flow toward," most likely, "to flow in," as would be the case of water lead through a canal to a reservoir. In Jain usage it refers to the flow of karma (conceived as some sort of fluid) into the acting agent. The flow adds karmic weight to the person's soul. In Buddhism, the term has lost almost all connection to its metaphoric origins, and is used abstractly as a technical term for the factors contributing to an increase or a maintenance of the flow of karma – traditionally these are the thirst for sense pleasures, thirst for rebirth, and thirst for extinction. The noun *āsava (āsrava)* has been understood tradi-

tionally to mean an "outflow," and the older metaphor has been replaced by that of an open sore or "canker" from which oozes some sort of polluting substance. With such a complicated history, the term defies translation. My translation is a poor compromise, but a compromise that reflects the fact that by the time the term was used in canonical works it was probably already an abstract technical term. See Fumiō Enomoto (1979).

30. This manuscript, collated by Chakravarti (1930) is unique in its presentation of the passages. All other versions, including the Chinese (see, e.g., *Taishō iv,* 212, 682b-682a), present these four "signs" as a list, either predicating each "sign" of all the conditioned dharmas *(samskāra)* or predicating the first three of conditioned dharmas, and the last sign (no-self) of all dharmas. These, more standard readings are analyzed thoroughly by Bernhard (1965).
31. The germ of the argument here is clearly the pericope at SN, IV. 1, which was discussed above.
32. Here, as I would also do in *Dhammapada* 277-279, I translate the verb nir-vid-in its Vedic sense of "getting rid of," and not in the Classical sense of "being disgusted by." The latter translation is a common contemporary reading in Theravāda settings. I follow Fausböll's interpretation. Like *virāga* and *nirvāṇa,* with which the word is often paired as a near synonym, *nirveda* refers to a state of perfect detachment and freedom.
33. In Chakravarti's manuscript, the variant portion of stanza 7 is seriously damaged. A conjectural reading would be "that everything that is suffering is empty."
34. This would be especially true if we compared the *Udānavarga* variants with the readings of other Dharmapadas. For this, consult Bernhard (1965) and Roth (1980).
35. The *Samyuktāgama* has other short sutras on this same topic. Some of these sutras, with their correspondences, in Pāli or elsewhere in the canonical collections, are: (a) *Taishō ii,* #99(80), 20a25-b27 = as an independent text titled Āryadharmamudrā-sūtra *(Taishō ii,* #103, 500ab) or Dharmamudrā-sūtra *(Taishō ii*, #104, 500bc): (b) *Taishō ii,* #99(81), 20b28-21a24 = Mahāli, *Saṃyutta Nikāya, 3,* 68-72; and (c) *Taishō ii,* #99(82), 20a25-b13 = no known parallels.
36. Perhaps this is the same Katyāyana appearing elsewhere in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* as the disciple who explains the Middle Way as a doctrine that neither affirms nor denies existence. He appears later in this anthology. The story of Katyāyana receiving the teaching on the Middle Way is perhaps only second to the story of the First and Second Sermons in canonical importance for all of "background" Buddhism.

37. Several persons with the name of Channa appear in the canon, including the faithful charioteer who drove the young prince Siddhartha when the latter came face to face with disease, old age, and death. If the Channa of the present sutra is the same who appears later in a second Channa Sutta (at *Saṃyutta Nikāya, 4,* 55-59), the desperation in Channa's behavior and language in the present selection may be a reflection of the author's knowledge of Channa's illness and death by suicide in the second sūtra. The story of the suicide also occurs in the Channovāda Sutta of *Majjhima Nikāya, 3,* 263-266.
38. This paragraph, the first major pericope in the sūtra, is possibly a logion. Note that the statement "nirvana is peace" is a definition, and hence almost tautological, unless one assumes that it refers to a specific formulation of what is nirvana and how it is attained. In these selections I have left the word nirvana untranslated, precisely because it can have so many different meanings in various Indian contexts, within Buddhist literature, and even within a single Buddhist text.
39. This refers to the cloister and gardens donated by Ghosila (Pāli: Ghosita), a lay supporter from Kauśambī (Pāli: Kosambī). Many important sermons and incidents in the history of the order took place in this locality – the most tragic of which was the first schism in the Sangha.
40. The pericope corresponds almost verbatim to *Saṃyutta Nikāya, 2*, 15-17 (xii.2.15).
41. This usage illustrates well the fragility or linguistic opaqueness of the concepts of self and no-self. What does not belong to myself is not synonymous with that which does not belong to the self, or with that which does not belong to self.

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SELF, DEPENDENT ORIGINATION AND ACTION IN BACTRIAN AND GANDHĀRAN SARVĀSTIVĀDA ABHIDHARMA TEXTS

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I. For East Asia, the class of Buddhist literature called '*Abhidharma*' mainly concerns Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma*. Only the Sarvāstivāda school has developed an '*Abhidharmapiṭaka*' in Sanskrit that in size and elaborateness is comparable to the Sthaviravāda '*Abhidhammapiṭaka*' of the Pali tradition.[1] Hence, for a correct understanding of East-Asian Buddhism, knowledge of the philosophical tenets of the Sarvāstivādins, one of the most important of the eighteen Lesser Vehicle (*Hīnayāna*, *Śrāvakayāna*) schools, is fundamental. This Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* literature is to be differentiated both as to textual type and as to doctrinal/regional affiliation.

As to textual type, four groups can be differentiated.[2] A first group are the simple expository texts that, actually, are extensions of *Sūtra* literature. The *Saṃgītiparyāya* (T.1536) and *Dharmaskandha* (T.1537) belong to this group.[3] In a second group of texts, more abstract principles of organization are adopted. These texts also show a development in doctrinal analysis as well as marks of factional differentiation. To this group belong the *Prajñaptipāda* (T.1538), the *Dhātukāya* (T.1539), the *Vijñānakāya* (T.1540), the *Prakaraṇapāda* (T.1541 and T.1542), and the **Aṣṭagrantha* (T.1543) / *Jñānaprasthāna* (T.1544).[4] At the present state of our knowledge, it is impossible to give an exact date for any of the above works, but they all surely predate the 2nd. century A.D.. The most plausible relative chronology is the following: *Saṃgītiparyāya* and *Dharmaskandha* are the earliest works, *Prajñaptiśāstra*, *Dhātukāya*, *Vijñānakāya* and *Prakaraṇapāda* form the middle group, and the *Jñānaprasthāna* is the youngest work.[5] The third group is formed by those texts that are highly polemical. To this group belong the **Mahāvibhāṣā* (T.1545)[6], the **Abhidharmavibhāṣā* (T.1546), and the **Vibhāṣāśāstra* (T.1547).[7] The fourth group of texts are the pedagogical digests. To this group belong the **Abhidharmahṛdaya* by Dharmaśreṣthin (T.1550)[8] and the one by Upaśānta (T.1551), the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* by Dharmatrāta (T.1552)[9], Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* (T.1558 and T.1559)[10], the **Abhidharmāmṛtarasa* attributed to Ghoṣaka (T.1553)[11], the **Abhidharmāvatāra* (T.1554) by Skandhila[12], and Saṃghabhadra's **Nyāyānusāra* (T.1562) and **Abhidharmasamayapradīpikā* (T.1563).[13] Also the *Milindapañha* (T.1670A/T.1670B) can be classified in this fourth category of texts. The *Milindapañha* collects the contents of the talks

between the Greek king Menandros (Menander) who ruled somewhere around 155-130 B.C. and a Buddhist monk called Nāgasena. In its Chinese version, the work, which is likely to be dated in the beginning of the Christian era, represents the doctrine of the Sarvāstivāda school.[14]

As to doctrinal affiliation, the Sarvāstivāda school has to be differentiated in -- essentially -- the following sub-schools: the original Sarvāstivādins originating from Mathurā, the Kāśmīri Vaibhāṣikas, the Western Masters of Gandhāra and Bactria (the Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntikas), and the Mūlasarvāstivādins. While we can place the first two types of texts described above under the general label 'Sarvāstivāda,' the third type of texts, although also current in Bactria and Gandhāra, is the dominant type of texts in Kaśmīra, and the fourth type of texts belongs essentially to the Sarvāstivādins of Bactria and Gandhāra. This difference is to be explained as follows: based on the seven basic Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* works (the first two types of texts), the philosophical-dogmatic development of the Sarvāstivāda school has known two directions: one line of development is situated in Kaśmīra where, based on the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the Vaibhāṣika-Sarvāstivādins developed their own doctrinal interpretation and, profiting from Kuṣāṇa political power, became the predominant Sarvāstivāda subgroup between the second and fourth centuries A.D. A second line of development is situated in Bactria and Gandhāra, where, modeled on Dharmaśreṣṭhin's Bactrian **Abhidharmahṛdaya*, a series of works called '*Hṛdaya*' was compiled. These works led to the *Abhidharmakośa* by Vasubandhu. Typologically, the works belonging to this second line of development are reminiscent of the seven fundamental Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* works.[15]

In what follows, we will trace the development of the notion of 'self' (*ātman*), its relation to 'dependent origination' (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and to 'action' (*karman*), and its implications in the Bactrian and Gandhāran *Abhidharma* works, as it is the second line of development described above that is actually to be regarded as representing the fundamental line of philosophical evolution.[16] We will open and conclude our outline with the Gandhāran **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya*. This work is to be dated in the fourth century A.D.. It is in this work that the influence of Kāśmīra ideas attains its final stage, i.e., the work forms the final point of an evolution, before Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośa*, formulates a Sautrāntika reaction to the Kāśmīra-Vaibhāṣika influence that characterizes the Gandhāran *Abhidharma* works.

II. The Buddhist doctrine can be summarized in the fourfold truth (*caturāryasatya*). The truth of frustration (*duḥkhasatya*) declares that the phenomenal world is characterized by frustration. The concept of frustration has three

components: there is ordinary frustration (*duḥkhaduḥkha*): all kinds of frustration related to human life: birth, disease, death, encountering what is not desired and not encountering what is desired; there is frustration originating from change (*vipariṇāmaduḥkha*): all satisfaction (*sukha*) will sooner or later turn to frustration; and, finally, there is frustration as a conditioned state (*saṃskāraduḥkha*). This last kind of frustration is related to the notion of 'self' (*ātman*): as the 'self' is a composite of the five appropriating aggregates (*upādānaskandha*), it is conditioned. These appropriating aggregates are, themselves, continuously changing. This implies that the 'self' does not exist as a constant 'own-being,' but is in continuous change, i.e. subject to frustration. The unenlightened worldling (*pṛthagjana*) thus meets with frustration (*duḥkha*) in life, however, he is unable to recognize it because of clinging to the self. As we read in the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya*:

"Because such defilements as belief in a self frustrate beings, they are called 'defilement (*kleśa*);' because of grasping the own person (*ātman*), they are called 'grasping (*upādāna*);' because of disturbing the mind, they are called 'conflict (*raṇa*)'."[17]

And further:

"There are no worldlings who do actually not grasp such formations as a self regarding impure factors;"[18] and "Formations are produced from conditions, and the ignorant fool with disturbed awarenesses produces a self and what belongs to a self (*ātmīya*) regarding the five appropriating aggregates, whether specific or general, and counts on them positively. This is called 'belief in a self'."[19]

As it is the illusion that there is a permanent self that brings forth frustration, one has to see impermanence (*anityatā*) and the non-self (*anātman*) in order to correctly recognize frustration. Consequently, the doctrine of twelve-membered dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*) that instructs that everything that has conditionally arisen (*pratītyasamutpanna*) is without a self (*anātmaka*) is inseparably related to the doctrine of non-self and to the liberation from frustration. The *Vinayamātṛkā* runs: "When a person sees twelve-membered origination, this is seeing the doctrine; it also is acquiring to see the 'self'".[20]

The truth of the origin of frustration (*samudayasatya*) explains that frustration arises from craving (*tṛṣṇā*). As the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* states:

"In being together and not being together with an agreeable object, there is a twofold genesis of craving: 'agreeable' is a name for an object that is to be desired. When this object is acquired, one is not free from genesis of craving. [...] If one has not acquired it yet, one [also] acquires the conceptual identification of

genesis of craving: 'How is it to be acquired?' 'Disagreeable' is a name for an object that is not to be desired. Also this is with a twofold genesis of craving: '[When] together [with it], there is the conceptual identification of genesis of craving for being free [from it]; [when] not together [with it], there is the conceptual identification of genesis of craving for no acquisition [of it]."[21]

The truth of cessation of the origin of frustration (*nirodhasatya*) declares that by removing the cause of frustration, one can attain *nirvāṇa*; and, finally, the truth of the path leading to the cessation of the origin of frustration (*mārgasatya*) concerns the path of salvation that consists of eight members: right view (*samyagdṛṣṭi*), right conceptualizing (*samyaksaṃkalpa*), right speech (*samyagvāc*), right action (*samyakkarmānta*), right livelihood (*samyagājīva*), right effort (*samyagvyāyāma*), right mindfulness (*samyaksmṛti*) and right concentration (*samyaksamādhi*).

The first two truths are linked to one another: it is because worldlings are characterized by craving that they experience frustration (*duḥkha*) and are prevented from seeing the noble truths. As the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* states:

"Since beings do not know the characteristic marks of impure formations yet, they grasp a self (*ātman*), satisfaction (*sukha*), permanence (*nityatā*) and cleanliness (*śubhā*).[22] Because they are covered by gestures (*ceṣṭā*), they do not know the non-self (*anātman*); because they are covered by deportment (*īrya*), they do not know frustration (*duḥkha*); because they are covered by a series of similarities, they do not know impermanence (*anityatā*); because they are covered by a thin skin, they do not know unpleasantness (*aśubhā*). Because they do not know these, they grasp a self, satisfaction, permanence and cleanliness."[23]

And further:

"When a self is seen, one plans to grasp it: because of the power of a view, one produces permanent planning to grasp something, denies the characteristic marks of the noble truths [...]. With perplexity regarding the truths, such different evil things as greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dveṣa*), delusion (*moha*) and pride (*māna*) arise."[24]

It is, consequently, by seeing that factors (*dharma*) -- including the five physical (*rūpa*) and mental (*saṃskāra-, saṃjñā-, vedanā- and vijñānaskandha*) aggregates that constitute a human person are without self (= *pudgalanairātmya*), that one can obtain to see the truths. As the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* states:

"When one achieves right effort, right certainty arises, and then there are [the truths of] frustration, the origin, cessation and the path. With false effort, false certainty arises, and then there are no [truths of] frustration, the origin, cessation and the path. When proceeding, this perplexity makes a false view arise: 'If this is no frustration, then it is the self'. When proceeding, this false view makes belief in a self arise."[25]

We could thus describe the Buddhist teaching of non-self (*anātman*) as a kind of prescriptive (in contradistinction to a descriptive) teaching: when saying that there is no *ātman* in the personality aggregates, the Buddha is prescribing how the personality aggregates should be viewed.[26]

Because factors, including something that could be described as one's 'personality,' are selfless (*anātmaka*), the question as to the true nature of factors is pushed forward. The answer to this question is found in the formula of dependent origination. In its standard formulation, this twelve-membered origination formula (*dvādaśāṅgapratītyasamutpāda*) runs as follows: (1) ignorance (*avidyā*), (2) conditioning factors (*saṃskāra*), (3) perceptual consciousness (*vijñāna*), (4) psychophysical complex (*nāmarūpa*), (5) six senses (*ṣaḍāyatana*), (6) contact (*sparśa*), (7) feeling (*vedanā*), (8) craving (*tṛṣṇā*), (9) grasping (*upādāna*), (10) existence (*bhava*), (11) birth (*jāti*), (12) decay-and-dying (*jarāmaraṇa*). According to Buddhist tradition, the historical Buddha discovered this formula during the night of his enlightenment (*nirvāṇa*) and in the reverse order from 'decay-and-dying' onward, in this way reaching at the basis of all frustration.[27]

In the history of Buddhist philosophy, this formula of twelve-membered origination gradually became to replace the concept of the four noble truths as summary of the doctrine. The four noble truths do say nothing more than that life is characterized by frustration and that one can get free from frustration by the eightfold path. The doctrine of twelve-membered origination gives a 'philosophical' explanation for this frustration: conditioned production.[28] The relation of the twelvefold conditioned arising with the four truths is also evident from the fact that, actually, we can interpret the series of twelve members in two ways: there is the 'emanation' series (*anuloma*) from 'ignorance' to 'decay-and-dying,' and the 'extirpation' series (*paṭiloma*) in the reverse order, i.e., the order in which -- according to tradition -- the historical Buddha discovered the formula.[29] The interpretation of the chain of dependent origination from 'ignorance' onwards concerns the arising of frustration, i.e. *saṃsāra*. The interpretation of the chain of dependent origination from 'decay-and-dying' onwards concerns the stopping of frustration, i.e. *nirvāṇa*. The first series leads to the world of the

unenlightened, the second series leads to the world of the enlightened. On this point, the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* claims: "The doctrine is twofold: the doctrine of *nirvāṇa* as highest truth (*paramārthasaya*), and the doctrine that everything is selfless".[30] As the formula of *pratītyasamutpāda* explains how frustration arises, it consequently also explains how it is to be stopped. While the first interpretation of the series relates to the second truth, the second relates to the fourth truth: the 'extirpation' series gives the method to stop frustration.[31] This method prescribes that one has to eliminate ignorance (*avidyā*), the first member of the chain of dependent origination, in order to attain liberation from the cycle of transmigration (*saṃsāra*).[32] Once one understands that frustration is the outflux of a conditioning force of certain specific factors, i.e., once one has eliminated ignorance, one is liberated from the illusion that there is a 'self'. As frustration is the outflux of a mutual conditional force, one is further liberated from the delusion that frustration is caused by oneself, by someone else, by both oneself and someone else, or is without a cause. As the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* states:

"When entering a general observation of factors (*dharma*), one achieves the true characteristic marks of factors. These four are impermanence, emptiness, selfless and dissatisfaction [...]. Because [factors] disappear instant after instant, they are impermanent; because they are free from such things as permanence, they are empty (*śūnya*); because they are not self-willed (*svatantra*), they are selfless; because they are oppressed by reality, there is frustration."[33]

III. There is textual evidence that the *pratītyasamutpāda* formula does not belong to the oldest phase of the Buddhist doctrine, but was subject to and the product of a longer process of philosophical maturation.[34] This is evident from doctrinal as well as from structural viewpoint.[35]

For the initial stage of the formula, we find evidence already in *Sūtra* literature: it is, e.g., to be read that one who does not see dependent origination, does not see the doctrine.[36] In the *Suttanipāta*, there is evidence that the main elements of later theories of dependent origination are already present: ignorance (*avidyā*), craving (*tṛṣṇā*), grasping (*upādāna*), existence (*bhava*), and decay-and-dying (*jarāmaraṇa*).[37] In the *Dīghanikāya*, we further find a ten member formula in which members (1) and (2) fail[38], i.e., a series starting with perceptual consciousness (*vijñāna*).[39] Another important variant is found in the *Majjhimanikāya*, where the first member is not ignorance (*avidyā*), but 'impurities' (*āsava* (*āsrava*)).[40]

As said, it is very likely that the twelvefold formula (that starts with *avidyā*) is originating in the fact that the simple statement that liberation from frustration

lies in acknowledging frustration (the first of the four noble truths) was -- philosophically -- not satisfying: the twelvefold formula provides an explanation for the cause of this frustration, i.e., the cause of frustration is exactly explained to be craving which derives from ignorance.[41] It is hereby to be kept in mind that the Buddha originally saw craving (*tṛṣṇā*) as the cause of rebirth.[42] Having a closer look at the twelve-membered formula, we can actually see two series: one starting with ignorance (*avidyā*) and one starting with craving (*tṛṣṇā*). There even is textual evidence that there actually existed two series.[43] The **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* calls these "a former" and "a later" chain of dependent origination.[44]

In early *Sūtra* literature, besides the classical enumeration of the twelve members, there also is an enumeration where members (4) phychophysical complex, (5) six senses, (11) birth, and (12) decay-and-dying, fail.[45] It is not without importance that these four exactly are the essential elements that constitute a human person. In *Sūtra* literature, the concept of dependent origination is further illustrated with the conditioning force of the five appropriating aggregates (*upādānakkhandha*).[46] Several texts of *Sūtra* literature further appeal to the 'descent' or 'entry' (*avakkanti* (*avakrānti*)) -- presumably into a rebirth state or into the womb.[47] It thus appears that the concept of the human body is later introduced in the twelve-membered explanation of the cause of frustration.

In this respect, Alex Wayman correctly remarks[48] that in dependent origination, there are two distinct interpretations: the one he calls "discovery and seeing," the second "lives of a person". The first interpretation refers to the Buddhist doctrine as such; the second shows the role of defilement (*kleśa*) and action (*karman*) in successive lives. Wayman suggests to see the first two truths as associated with the first kind of dependent origination: dealing with beings as a whole and not with particular ones; while the last two noble truths would then be associated with the second kind of dependent origination, i.e., concerned with lives of individual persons.[49] For the scope of the present study, naturally, the second kind is of primary importance.

According to the *Abhidharma* system, personal existence further consists of twelve sense(-spheres) (*āyatana*) (the six outward faculties with their respective objects)[50] and eighteen elements (*dhātu*) (the six outward faculties, their respective objects, and the forms of consiousness that result from the contact of these). A human person, as a collection of these elements, exists merely as a designation (*prajñapti*) or merely as a name (*nāmamātra*), but does not exist in an ultimate sense. In this way, the non-self of a person (*pudgala-nairātmya*) is maintained.

On the subject, the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* runs: "Emptiness of the inward is emptiness of the inward senses. It is considering these as selfless".[51] These elements that constitute the human person, each exist with their specific characteristic marks (*svalakṣaṇa*) and their specific nature (*svabhāva*). Thus, all forms of phenomenal existence are considered to be unreal, but the components (*dharma*) of which they are composed are taken to be real. The theory of conditioned production consequently becomes the causal law that determines the relationship between real elements.[52] In the Siamese edition of the Pali version of the *Milindapañha* we read[53]: "O Great King! These five aggregates do neither transfer to another world, nor do the five aggregates take place in themselves. By actions (*kamma*), good and evil, shall sentient beings be born in the womb, depending upon these five aggregates just like the image in the mirror".[54] We may interpret this explanation by Nāgasena as that the only reality are the five aggregates. These aggregates transmigrate because of action (*kamma* (*karman*)). That the five aggregates depend upon the five aggregates and come into existence in "the womb of the mother" is to be explained as follows: as a human person is but a composition of the five aggregates, at death, these aggregates are decomposed: there is no 'self' whose existence is prolonged after death. When reborn, five aggregates are again combined to form a new person. That this happens "by action," "like the image in the mirror" implies that the new combination of five aggregates is effectuated in view of one's previous deeds. Action thus becomes the means with which the doctrine of selflessness can be expressed.[55] This means that action becomes the link between the non-self and transmigration.

Action (*karman*) is a function which always continues to exist. This does not mean that it continues indefinitely in time: its continuation only has effect on one's own person. *Karman* is the shape in which the "non-self" becomes manifest for worldlings.[56] Although this strong connection between action and the non-self does not require any medium between them whatever, the Sarvāstivāda School has constructed the concept of *avijñapti*. '*Avijñapti*' is an either good or bad serial continuity (*anubandha*) that depends on the great elements (*mahābhūta*) and is active in a person with distracted awarenesses (*vikṣiptacitta*) or who is without awarenesses (*acitta*).[57] It is a kind of action that is unmanifesting, i.e., a kind of action that does not manifest itself to others. In this sense, it is similar to mental action (*manaskarman*), however, it is material since it depends on material elements. This makes it similar to corporeal and vocal action (*kāyakarman*, *vākkarman*).[58] Action that is unmanifesting (*avijñaptikarman*) can be compared with making a promise: the *avijñaptikarman* is represented by the period of time that elapses between making the promise and the actual fulfilment of that promise.

IV. We can now turn our attention to the Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* works. In the Chinese version of the *Milindapañha*, we have the following passage:

"Nāgasena said: 'The Buddhist scripture says: Man's birth and death are like a wheel. While turning, one follows another without interruption.' Nāgasena said: 'Perceptual consciousness perceives through the eye and the form of ten thousand things. When these three things are combined, frustration (*duḥha*) and satisfaction (*sukha*) come from that combination. From frustration and satisfaction comes grasping (*upādāna*). From grasping comes craving (*tṛṣṇā*), and from craving comes existence (*bhava*). From existence comes birth (*jāti*), and from birth comes performing good and bad deeds. From good and bad deeds comes rebirth."[59]

This is then elaborated to the different forms of perceptual consciousness (*vijñāna*): auditory perceptual consciousness (*śrotravijñāna*), olfactory perceptual consciousness (*ghrāṇavijñāna*), gustatory perceptual consciousness (*jihvāvijñāna*), corporeal perceptual consciousness (*kāyavijñāna*), and mental perceptual consciousness (*manovijñāna*).[60] Also the chain of dependent origination as perceived by the Buddha (from decay-and-dying to ignorance) and leading to the end of frustration and leading to *nirvāṇa* is alluded to.[61] That both the Pali and the Chinese version of the *Milindapañha* link the doctrine of non-self with the *karman*-doctrine can easily be explained by the fact that before the time of king Aśoka, the Sarvāstivādins were closely connected to the Sthaviravāda school from which they separated around the time of king Aśoka's reign.[62]

On the problem of the self, the *Dharmaskandha*, one of the oldest Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* works, not only, as the *Saṃgītiparyāya*[63], only uses the terms 'dependent origination' (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and 'dependently originated factors' (*pratītyasamutpanna dharma*) as labels to categorize other factors[64], but it has a long independent section on dependent origination.[65] This section is concluded by the Buddha with the observation that when one correctly understands dependent origination and dependently originated factors, self-centered investigation into the past, present, and future is obstructed. It is this investigation that characterizes those holding the view of a permanent self.[66] This is completely in line with what was outlined above. In some passages, the *Dharmaskandha* is reminiscent of older *Sūtra* passages.[67] The work discusses the twelve members in the order as leading to the arising of frustration: ignorance (*avidyā*) leads to conditioning factors (*saṃskāra*) and up to birth (*jāti*) leads to decay-and-dying (*jarāmaraṇa*). Hereby, all kinds of causal relationship between every two members as they are mentioned in the *Āgamas* are dealt with.[68] This includes such

exceptional combinations as the psychophysical complex (*nāmarūpa*) leading to perceptual consciousness (*vijñāna*) and the psychophysical complex (*nāmarūpa*) leading to contact (*sparśa*) which are found in the *Dīghanikāya*[69].

That the concept of dependent origination is gaining importance in the *Dharmaskandha* is not without importance. As it has a close structural connection with non-Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* texts -- namely the *Vibhaṅga* of the Pali tradition, and the *Śāriputrābhidharmaśāstra* -- the *Dharmaskandha* occupies a significant historical position among the seven early Sarvāstivāda texts. Also the *Vibhaṅga* belongs to the earliest phase of (Pali) *Abhidharma* texts.[70] The *Śāriputrābhidharma*, an *Abhidharma* text of unclear sectarian affiliation, discusses dependent origination in the same way.[71] These early texts -- *Dharmaskandha*, *Vibhaṅga* and *Śāriputrābhidharma* -- thus are reminiscent of older *Sūtra* literature, and do not mention an interpretation of the twelve-membered causation as a whole extending to the past, present and future, or an interpretation that is related to rebirth of a person.

The investigation of the Abhidharmists soon developed into a theory of causation extending to the three periods of time (*trikāla*). This divided the twelve members into past ((1) ignorance and (9) grasping), present ((3) perceptual consciousness and (10) existence), and future ((11) birth and (12) decay-and-dying) existences.[72] This was a logical consequence of the interpretation of the twelve-membered *pratītyasamutpāda* in non-reverse order. The *Abhidharma* understanding of the twelve-membered *pratītyasamutpāda* in a temporal framework became strongly influenced by the ideas of causal law and *karma*-theory. The chain of cause-and-fruition gradually came to be understood solely as a series of causal relationship, going with the flow of time: a cause precedes its fruition. Concerning the conditioning relation between each two individual members, the *Dharmaskandha*[73] notes that dependent origination (the cause) and dependenlty originated factors (the fruition) are identical in their intrinsic nature, but differ in specific instances: that is to say, the same factor can be considered either conducive to dependent origination or dependently originated.[74] This implies that, in some of these bi-member relations, the *Dharmaskandha* explicitly mentions the process of transfer at death and the subsequent descent into the womb: the relation between perceptual consciousness and the psychophysical complex; the one between the psychophysical complex and the six senses; the one between the psychophysical complex and contact; and the one between grasping and existence.[75]

Of the works belonging to the second type of *Abhidharma* texts described under (**I.**), the *Prakaraṇapāda* is close to the *Saṃgītiparyāya* and *Dharmaskandha* in mentioning dependent origination as a label in categorizing factors.[76]

While in the *Dharmaskandha*, there is no dependent discussion of causation yet, in the *Abhidharma* texts of the middle period, more precisely in the *Vijñānakāya*, a causal theory emerges.[77] In this work, dependent origination is mentioned in a section on the topic of 'causes and conditions' (*hetupratyaya*).[78] The *Vijñānakāya* gives two interpretative models of the twelve individual conditioning relations: a simultaneous (= *kṣaṇika*) and a sequential (= *sāṃbandhika*) temporal model. According to the simultaneous model[79], all twelve members function within a single instant of time and, as a whole, represent the arising of ordinary experience. For example, when greed (*lobha*) regarding a desirable object arises because of lack of non-cognizance (*ajñāna*), this greed represents the conditioning factors (*saṃskāra*), related to the other eleven members; non-cognizance is explained to be ignorance (*avidyā*):

"Because non-cognizance flows regarding desirable objects, greed arises. Among this, non-cognizance is ignorance. Greed are conditioning factors. The characteristic marks of understanding objects exactly is its consciousness. Consciousness combined with four aggregates is the psychophysical complex. That the psychophysical complex depends on the faculties exactly is the six senses. That the six senses are combined exactly is its contact. Leading to receiving with this, is feeling. That feeling produces happiness is craving. That craving magnifies, is called 'grasping'. Action that can produce a later existence is existence. That the aggregates are manifested, is then called 'birth'. That the aggregates become mature, is called 'decay'. That the aggregates are rejected is dying."[80]

In the sequential model, each of the twelve members constitutes the condition for the arising solely of the subsequent member. In the explanation of several of the individual members, *karman* and rebirth of a person are alluded to:

"When all ignorance is not abandoned and not comprehended yet, it is the cause (*hetu*) and the condition (*pratyaya*) for all conditioning factors to arise: either virtuous conditioning factors follow, or unvirtuous conditioning factors follow, or untouched conditioning factors. When, in this way, conditioning factors are not abandoned and not comprehended yet, they are the cause and the condition for consciousness to arise. One either goes to a good course (*sugati*), or one goes to a woeful course (*durgati*). When, in this way, consciousness is not abandoned and not comprehended yet, it is the cause and the condition for the psychophysical complex to arise. Either in this world, or in a later world. When, in this way, the psychophysical complex is not abandoned and not comprehended yet, it is cause and condition for the six senses to arise. Either completed or not completed. Because the six senses are combined, there is contact. As contact leads to receiving, there is feeling. Because feeling produces happiness, there is

craving. As craving magnifies, it is said to be grasping. Action that can affect a later existence is called 'existence'. That the aggregates become manifest, is said to be birth. That the aggregates become mature, is said to be decay. That the aggregates are rejected, is said to be dying."[81]

In the most recent of the early Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* texts, the *Jñānaprasthāna*, causality is no longer examined in the framework of the formula of dependent origination, but in relation to specific causal operations, in particular in relation to the innovative theory of the six causes.[82] Also liberation from frustration is accordingly explained with respect to these six causes. This does not imply that the *Jñānaprasthāna* completely ignores the traditional twelve-member formulation of dependent origination.[83] According to the *Jñānaprasthāna*, the twelve members are to be interpreted as extending over three lifetimes: the first two members operate in the previous lifetime to produce the middle eight members in the present lifetime, whereafter these present members produce the last two members in the subsequent lifetime.[84] As the six causes came to be the most important element of the causal theory of the Sarvāstivādins[85], the twelve members were deprived of this role, and were re-interpreted: they were solely used to explain rebirth of a person.[86]

V. A work that is similar in purpose to the *Jñānaprasthāna*, and that probably is to be dated somewhat before that work, is Dharmaśreṣthin's **Abhidharmahṛdaya*.[87] The work is a pedagogical digest of Sarvāstivāda philosophy by a Bactrian. As mentioned, based on this work, a series of works entitled '*Hṛdaya*' were written, the last of which is Dharmatrāta's **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya*. Because of the -- in the second to fourth centuries A.D. -- predominant power of Vaibhāṣika-Sarvāstivāda philosophical interpretations, the Gandhāran *Abhidharma* works, one of which is Dharmatrāta's work, show an ever more obvious Kāśmīra influence. Unavoidingly, when Vaibhāṣika power waned, an 'orthodox Gandhāra' answer was formulated to this Vaibhāṣika influence. The most typical work of this period is Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*. In Dharmatrāta's **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya*, a work that constitutes the final phase in the evolution of Kāśmīra influence, the theories of non-self, dependent origination, action, and rebirth, all are united:[88]

"*Question*: The World-honored One has been speaking of the chain of dependent origination. Which characteristic marks does this have? *Answer*: According to the sequence of defilements (*kleśa*), actions (*karman*) and actual entities (*vastu*), there is birth. It should be known that this has members. Beings arise through all of them. The members of the chain of dependent origination in

three parts are defilements, actions and actual entities. Defilements, actions and actual entities are called 'the members of the chain of dependent origination' regarding arising in successive production. It should be known that these are the members of the chain of dependent origination.

"The establishment of all these parts is rearising of beings. Two are past, and [two are] future. Eight are said to be intermediate. The establishment of all these parts is rearising of beings: Regarding this chain of dependent origination in three parts, twelve members are spoken of. *Question*: How are these? *Answer*: "Two are past, and [two are] future. Eight are said to be intermediate": The state of defilement at the moment of the past existence is said to be 'ignorance'. The action of the moment of the past existence is said to be 'conditioning factors'. What is successive in the present is said to be 'perceptual consciousness'. The successive state of the six senses that are not completed yet, is said to be called the 'psychophysical complex'. The state of the faculties that are completed, is said to be the 'six senses'. The combination of a certain faculty, its object and its form of perceptual consciousness when not being able to differentiate frustration, satisfaction and what is neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant (*aduḥkhāsukha*) yet, is said to be 'contact'. Differentiating the limitation of frustration and of satisfaction, and not being able to differentiate the limitation of defilement yet, is said to be 'feeling'. The arising of feelings of the fool [...] regarding what is to be desired or is not to be desired -- either separate or combined, is said to be 'craving'. Widely producing defilement in the present is said to be 'grasping'. Having to arise again in a later existence, is said to be 'existence'. Birth of future aggregates, sown in the present existence, is said to be 'birth'. Maturation of the aggregates in the future, is said to be 'decay'. Future abandoning of the aggregates is said to be 'dying'.

"Three members of existence are defilements. Two are actions, and seven are actual entities. Seven are called 'members of the former existence'. Five are said to be the later state. Three members of existence are defilements. Two are actions, and seven are actual entities. Ignorance, craving and grasping as three members of existence are defilements. Conditioning factors and existence as two members are actions. The other members are said to be actual entities. Seven are called 'members of the former existence'. Five are said to be the later state. It should be known that the seven members from ignorance up to feeling are called 'the former chain of dependent origination'. The other five members are said to be 'the later chain of dependent origination'.

"Of the first members, five are said to be fruition. The other two are a cause. Of the later members, three are said to be a cause. The other two are a fruition. From consiousness up to feeling of the former chain of dependent origi-

nation, are a fruition; ignorance and conditioning factors are a cause. The first three members of the later chain of dependent origination are said to be a cause, the later two members are said to be a fruition.

"*Question*: Do some of the former and later members acquire to proceed in harmony? *Answer*: There is such an acquisition. How is this? Former delusion is later craving and grasping. The combination of conditioning factors and existence is likewise. The psychophysical complex, senses, contact and feeling are equally said to be with decay-and-dying. The perceptual consciousness of primary experiencing a body, is future birth.

"*Question*: That there are former and later members that include one another when proceeding, is already known. How are they produced? *Answer*: Defilement produces defilement and action. This action makes an actual entity arise when proceeding. Also an actual entity makes actual entities arise, and [actual entities] further also make defilement arise. Because of defilement, defilement arises: because of craving, grasping arises. Because of defilement, action arises: because of grasping, existence arises. Because of action, an actual entity arises: because of existence, birth arises. Because of an actual entity, actual entities arise: because of birth, decay-and-dying arise. Actual entities further make defilement arise: the psychophysical complex, six senses, contact and feeling previously spoken of, exactly are as decay-and-dying of the later members. That is why it is said that because of feeling, craving arises. It is also said that because of decay and dying, there is ignorance. This is called 'the endless wheel of existence'.

"*Question*: There are four kinds of chain of dependent origination. What are these four? *Answer*: Proceeding by connection (*sāṃbandhika*), instantaneous (*kṣaṇika*), extended (*prākarṣika*) and the previously mentioned segmented (*āvasthika*). These are said to be the chain of dependent origination. Proceeding by connection is the meaning of being endless. Because cause and fruition are connected when proceeding, the 'wheel' of the chain of dependent origination' is spoken of: just as the beginning of the full moon is not to be known. That is why the *sūtras* say: "The origin of craving for existence (*bhavatṛṣṇā*)[89] is not to be known". That "It should be said that it does not exist; it should not be said that it is not to be known where existence comes from: it would [otherwise] be impossible to know what exists," is not right. Why? Because there is no cause of teaching, there is no teaching, but, if [its cause] exists and one is asked: "Why would [its cause] not exist?," it then is not suited to depend on [the existence of] the teaching. [However, when] stating that [its cause] is not to be known, being asked why [it is] not to be known, then the answer is: "It is not to be known in any way". The chain of dependent origination is such dependent successiveness

as the beginning of the wheel of the full moon that is not to be known. The beginning of the wheel of the full moon is not to be known; that is why it is said that it is not to be known. Because all members of existence are present during the period of an instant, being instantaneous is spoken of: just as the *Vijñānakāyaśāstra* says regarding the thing of decoration.[90] Because of non-cognizance, greed is produced. Non-cognizance is ignorance. Greed is conditioning factors. Knowing regarding actual entities is perceptual consciousness. The four aggregates that are produced together with perceptual consciousness is the psychophysical complex. The faculties established by the psychophysical complex are the six senses. That what is grasped by the six senses is contact. Wakefulness following contact is feeling. That in which feeling finds joy and satisfaction is craving. The envelopers that arise together with craving is grasping. Action that later arises from feeling is existence. Producing future aggregates is birth. Because of maturation of aggregates, there is decay. Abandoning aggregates is dying. Because of extended proceeding, the extended chain of dependent origination is spoken of: it is the meaning of abiding for a long time when actually proceeding. It are not only the twelve members that are said to be the chain of dependent origination. Either that which makes arise or that which arises, all conditioned factors are said to concern the chain of dependent origination. The venerable Puṇyayaśa said that, sometimes, that which is produced from dependent origination is not that which is already produced from dependent origination: future factors; that which is already produced from dependent origination is not that which is produced from dependent origination: the five aggregates of death of the past and of the present *arhat*; that which is produced from dependent origination is that which is already produced from dependent origination: exception made for the five aggregates of death of the past and of the present *arhat*, all other past and present factors; that which is not produced from dependent origination is not that which is already produced from dependent origination: unconditioned factors. Because of that which is to be acquired in what is segmented, 'segmented' is spoken of. The state of defilement of the moment of the past existence is said to be ignorance. The rest is as has been said previously."

The above citation is to be analyzed as follows: the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* opens with classifying the twelve members into three categories: defilements (which can be seen as karmic causes), actions (*karman*), and actual entities[91]. These three categories are then grouped as to the period of time they belong to, whereafter they are, each individually, concisely explained.[92] Returning to the division in defilements, actions and actual entities, the number of

members belonging to each of these three categories is given. It is noteworthy that ignorance (*avidyā*) and craving (*tṛṣṇā*) are both described as defilements (= karmic causes). This gives evidence for it that there actually existed two causal series.[93] Also the section on the 'former chain of dependent origination' (ignorance up to feeling) and the 'later chain of dependent origination' (craving up to decay-and-dying) refers to this twofold series. The cause-and-fruition theory is worked out in the next three sections, i.e., applying cause-and-fruition to the twofold series. Hereby, the members that were described as actual entities are defined as fruition, the members described as defilements and actions are explained to be causes. Alex Wayman[94] remarks that the *Abhidharma* centers of the Northwest (Gandhāra and Kaśmīra) have two main currents for interpreting the dependent origination formula: the Vaibhāṣika interpretation and the Sautrāntika interpretation. The Vaibhāṣika theory subdivides the twelve members into sets of two, five, three and two. The Sautrāntika division is three, four, three and two. The **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* here clearly is in accordance with the Vaibhāṣika opinion.[95]

<u>past</u>		
<u>former chain of dependent origination</u>		
(1) ignorance	defilement	cause
(2) conditioning factors	action	cause
<u>present</u>		
(3) perceptual consciousness	actual entity	fruition
(4) psychophysical complex	actual entity	fruition
(5) six senses	actual entity	fruition
(6) contact	actual entity	fruition
(7) feeling	actual entity	fruition
<u>later chain of dependent origination</u>		
(8) craving	defilement	cause
(9) grasping	defilement	cause
(10) existence	action	cause
<u>future</u>		
(11) birth	actual entity	fruition
(12) decay-and-dying	actual entity	fruition

After working through the subdivisions in view of various subproblems, four interpretations of the series of twelve are given. Two of these were already discussed in the *Vijñānakāya*: the sequential (*sāṃbandhika*) and the simultaneous (*kṣaṇika*) interpretative model.[96] These four are: by connection (*sāṃbaṇdhika*), instantaneous (*kṣaṇika*), extended (*prākarṣika*), and segmented (*āvasthika*). The *sāṃbandhika* interpretation refers to a cause-and-fruition relation between two subsequent members; the *kṣaṇika* interpretation refers to the momentaneous existence of each of the twelve members individually; and the *prākarṣika* interpretation refers to the causal process as a whole. In the section starting with "It are not only the twelve members that are said to be the chain of dependent origination," the three periods of time are referred to. This points to it that here the *āvasthika* interpretation -- the peculiar Sarvāstivāda interpretation[97] -- starts. The *āvasthika* interpretation involves twelve distinct instances (over three periods of time) of the five aggregates that constitute a human person.[98]

Directly linked to the division of the twelve members as to the three periods of time, is the embryological interpretation. The notion of a '*gandharva*,' a subtle-form body that escapes from the corpse and searches a womb, fills the gap between the state of death and the state at the conception: it is the intermediate state being.[99] On the subject, the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* runs:

"*Question*: how many forms of existence are there? *Answer* [...]: Existence at rearising and existence at death, existence at a former time and further also the intermediate one. Existence at rearising (*upapattibhava*) is the five aggregates of the state (*avasthā*) of birth: because of being together with birth, it is called 'existence at rearising' [...]. Existence at death (*maraṇabhava*) is the five aggregates of dying: because of being together with dying, it is called 'existence at death' [...]. Existence at a former time (*pūrvakālabhava*) is -- exception made for the five aggregates of the state of birth and of the state of dying -- the existence in between. Because of abiding for a long time, sown by former action (*pūrvakarman*), it therefore is called 'existence at a former time'. Intermediate existence (*antarābhava*) is existence from after dying up to not having acquired another existence at rearising yet: approaching experiencing existence at rearising in between. It is not included in the courses (*gati*)[100] with the five aggregates. Because of being produced in between the two, it is called 'intermediate existence'. *Question*: How many of these forms of existence are instantaneous and how many abide for a long time? *Answer*: It should be known that two are instantaneous: existence at death and existence at rearising each are with a duration of an instant (*kṣaṇa*): because they do not abide for a long time. Because of this meaning, it should be known that existence at a former time and intermediate existence are abiding for a long time".[101]

And further:

"It should be known that there is intermediate existence [...]. How is it then? *Answer*: It is to be compared with a path between villages: existence at death and existence at rearising are as reaching one village from one village. The same applies to being with existence at rearising as destiny from existence at death. As the *Aśvalāyanasūtra* says[102]: 'When coming from this residence[103]'".[104]

VI. An analysis of the relation between self, dependent origination and action in the Bactrian and Gandhāran Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* works as developed from early *Sūtra* literature shows to be the following. From more or less unrelated schemes to explain conditioned production, two causal chains are developed: a series from ignorance up to feeling and a series from craving up to decay-and-dying. These two come to form one integrated twelve-membered formula to explain dependent origination. With or somewhere after this formation, the concept of a human body is introduced in the twelve-membered explanation of the cause of frustration: the five appropriating aggregates that each individually and as a combination are selfless. As the *Abhidharma* system further develops, to these aggregates, a series of sense(-spheres) and elements is further added and explained to equally constitute the human person. While these constituting parts are regarded as real existing entities, their combination is continued to be considered as unreal. In this way, the non-self of a person is maintained. As the concept of selflessness makes something transferring to one or other rebirth state at death impossible, the five aggregates are taken to decompose and five new aggregates are claimed to be combined to a new person. Action determines the state of that future birth. In the oldest of the Bactrian and Gandhāran Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma* works, the *Milindapañha*, this transfer is explained as effectuated through action. However no twelve-membered chain is mentioned yet.

The *Dharmaskandha* already has the twelve-membered chain, however does not interpret these twelve as to three periods of time (*trikāla*) or with respect to rebirth of a person. As the Sarvāstivādins developed the concept of the existence of the three periods of time, the idea of '*karman*' influenced the twelve-membered chain idea. This explains why in the *Dharmaskandha*, although not interpreting the twelve members as a whole in respect to the three periods of time, the notion of the three periods of time is referred to in bi-member relations.

The *Vijñānakāya* represents a further stage of development. In this work, a simultaneous and a sequential interpretative model for the twelve members, as well as a personal interpretation is introduced. In Sarvāstivāda philosophy, a set

of four condtions and six causes came to explain the whole causal process. As a consequence, in the *Jñānaprasthāna*, rebirth of a person and conditioned production are separated: the first is explained as to the three periods of time of the twelve-membered formula; the second is explained in terms of the innovative theory of the six causes. Dharmaśreṣṭhin's, Upaśānta's and Dharmatrāta's work, as well as the **Abhidharmāmṛtarasaśāstra* and *Abhidharmakośa* explain the causal process by the four conditions and six causes. Rebirth of a person extending to the three periods of time is interpreted in four ways, one of which is the *āvasthika* interpretation, thè peculiar Sarvāstivāda interpretation. As, in the gap in between existence at death and existence at rearising, there is no more body to perform action, the Sarvāstivādins integrate two innovative concepts in their causal theory: the concept of unmanifesting (*avijñapti*) action, and the '*gandharva*,' a subtle form body that embodies intermediate existence and effectuates the *avijñaptikarman*.

Notes

1. See Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 1-10.
2. Cfr. Cox, 1995: 30-31.
3. For a detailed treatment of the *Saṃgītiparyāya*: see Lindtner in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 203-216 and Willemen, Dessein and Cox, 1998: 177-181. For the *Dharmaskandha*: see Greiner in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 179-187, Willemen, Dessein and Cox, 1998: 181-189.
4. For a detailed treatment of the *Prajñaptipāda*: see Potter (Ed.), 1996(b): 217; Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 189-197. For the *Dhātukāya*: see Buswell in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 345-358; Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 206-212. For the *Vijñānakāya*: see Potter (Ed.), 1996(c): 367-374; Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 197-205. For the *Prakaraṇapāda*: see Lindtner in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 375-379; Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 212-221. For the **Aṣṭagrantha/Jñānaprasthāna*: see Gerow and Potter in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 417-449 and Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 221-229.
5. See Frauwallner, 1964: 71; Fukuhara, 1965: 8; Buswell and Jaini in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 102; Dessein, 1996: 647.
6. For a detailed description of the **Mahāvibhāṣā*: see Ichimura, Kawamura, Buswell and Cox in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 511-568.
7. For a discussion on the *Vibhāṣā* literature: see Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 229-239.

8. A summary of the text was made by Willemen in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 451-470. See also Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 255-269.
9. For a summary: see my "Dharmatrāta: Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya" in Potter, K., (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies, Vol.VIII, Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D.*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass (forthcoming). For a discussion on the textual type of the work: see my "Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya, Sūtra or Śāstra" in *Indian Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 1998 (forthcoming).
10. For a summary of the work: see Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 269-278.
11. See my "The Resonance of Ghoṣaka" in *Etudes Asiatiques*, 4.1998. See also Kritzer in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 489-509 and Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 278-282.
12. For a summary: see Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 282-285.
13. For a summary of these two works: see Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 240-249. See also Cox, C., "Nyāyānusāra" in Potter, K., (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies, Vol.VIII, Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D.*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass (forthcoming).
14. See Potter, 1996(d): 471-488 and Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 104-105. See also Demiéville, 1924.
15. See Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 123-125.
16. See Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: xi.
17. T.1552: 871a28-29. Cf. T.1550: 809b15-22; T.1551: 834b26-834c5; T.1553: 968c25-26.
18. T.1552: 901a20-21.
19. T.1552: 900b10-12. Cf. T.1550: 815c13; T.1551: 844b22-23; T.1553: 972a15-16.
20. T. 1463: 820b13-14.
21. T.1552: 907b14-18.
22. I.e. the four perverted views (*viparyāsa*).
23. T.1552: 871a10-11. Cf. T.1550: 809b7; T.1551: 834a27-b9; T.1553: 968c22-23
24. T.1552: 884b19-21. Cp. Andersen and Smith (Eds.), 1948: 197 (*Suttanipāta*: 1033): "The world is shrouded by ignorance (*avijjā*). On account of avarice (*veviccha*) and sloth (*pamāda*) it doesn't shine. I call cravings (*jappā*) defilement (*abhilepana*). Frustration (*dukkha*) is the great danger of the world." Translation: Nakamura, 1980: 165.
25. T.1552: 204, 904a8-11.
26. See Wayman, 1970-1971: 197-198. Cf. T.1552: 962b9: "All factors are selfless. The wise one can see this".

27. See Wayman, 1970-1971: 186 and Wayman, 1980: 276 ff.. See also Waldschmidt, 1951: 92-93; Lamotte, 1980:120-123.
28. See Waldschmidt, 1960: 214 ff.; Bernhard, 1968-1969: 55.
29. See Cox, 1993: 126. On the origin of the two and the relative dating of the two: see Cox, 1993: 139, note # 25.
30. T.1552: 953a4-5.
31. See Yamada, 1980: 375. See also de La Vallée Poussin, 1913: 1; Waldschmidt, 1960: 228. Chaterjee (1957: 313) interprets the second and third truth as comprised in dependent origination.
32. See Wayman, 1970-1971: 186.
33. T.1552: 909b8-15. Cf. T.1550: 818a24-b2; T.1551: 848c27-849a8; T.1553: 972c26-29.
34. This may also explain why the Buddha is reported not to have entrusted even Ānanda with the teaching of the twelvefold formula. See de La Vallée Poussin, 1913: 4; Bernhard, 1968-1969: 54; Waldschmidt, 1951: 93; Waldschmidt, 1960: 216-217, 228.
35. Louis de La Vallée Poussin (1897: 463) remarks that the formula of the twelve members as it has been formed in the course of time by means of various recastings of no doctrinal importance, does not embody any learned theory distinct from the *samudayasatya*, as conceived in its most rudimentary form. See also de La Vallée Poussin, 1902: 280-281.
36. MN 28. *Mahāhatthipadopamasutta* (Trenckner (Ed.), 1888: 191). Cp. MA (7.No.30), T.1: 467a18. Cf. *Vinayamātṛkā*, T.1463: 820b13 ff..
37. See Nakamura, 1980: 165-166.
38. DN 15 (Rhys Davids and Estlin Carpenter, 1947: 56 ff.). Cf. *Mahāvadānasutta* par.9b14. For still other forms: see Bernhard, 1968-1969: 56.
39. In Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma*, the first two members came to be interpreted as representing the existence at former time (*pūrvakālabhava*). Also the second century philosopher Nāgārjuna says that not ignorance and conditioning factors, but consciousness (*vijñāna*) starts the transfer by descending into the womb, or other birthplace. (See Wayman, 1974(b): 229 and 237, note # 9). See further also Lindtner, 1990: 171.
Discussing descent into the womb (*garbhāvakrānti*), the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* takes conceptual identification (*saṃjñā*) as essential point (T.1552: 952a24-b15): "*Question*: The World-honored One has been speaking of four forms of descent into the womb. How are these? *Answer*: Descent without comprehension (*asaṃprajanya*) as well as abiding and leaving the womb. Up to descent with tranquillization and abiding and leaving further likewise. When beings with scarce merit descent into the

womb, overturned conceptual identification (*viparītasaṃjñā*) proceeds and so does overturned resolve (*viparītādhimokṣa*). [...] When abiding in the womb, there also is overturned conceptual identification and overturned resolve. [...] When leaving the womb, there also are overturned conceptual identification and resolve. [...] This is said to be the first form of descent into the womb. The second form of descent into the womb is when knowing oneself that one descents into the womb with non-overturned conceptual identification and with non-overturned resolve. When abiding and leaving, they are overturned - as has been said before. The third form of descent into the womb is when knowing oneself: 'In this way, I descent into the womb, and in this way I abide in the womb'. When leaving, they are overturned - as has been said before. The fourth form of descent into the womb is when knowing oneself: 'In this way, I descent into the womb,' and at the moment of abiding, knowing oneself: 'In this way, I abide in the womb;' and at the moment of leaving, knowing oneself: 'In this way, I leave the womb'. *Question*: "With which persons are these forms of descent into the womb said to be? *Answer*: The first is with foul action and is further also not seeking for knowledge. With the two in the middle, one is accomplished. With the fourth, both are accomplished. The first is with good action that is inaccurate. There neither is seeking for knowledge. The second is with action that is clean but is not with seeking for knowledge. The third is seeking for knowledge, but is with action that is inaccurate. With the fourth, both are accomplished. Moreover, it is said that the first form of descent into the womb concerns all beings, the second concerns the sovereign of the world (*cakravartin*), the third concerns the *pratyekabuddha* and the fourth concerns the *Tathāgata*". See also de La Vallée Poussin, 1913: 43.

40. Trenckner (Ed.), 1888: 54. Cf. *Visuddhimagga*, Rhys Davids (Ed.): 1975: 525. Lambert Schmithausen (1992: 124) remarks that "In Buddhist canonical (and post-canonical) texts, the *ās(r)avas* are often specified as three, viz. [desire for] sensual pleasure (*kāmās(r)ava*), [desire for] existence (*bhavās(r)ava*), and ignorance (*avijjāsava / avidyāsrava*), to which later on a fourth one, viz. (false) views (*diṭṭh'āsava / dṛṣṭyāsrava*), is added. This means that the *ās(r)avas* are understood as evil mental attitudes or states, i.e., in later terminology, as *kleśas*, and often the terms *āsrava* and *kleśa* are even taken to be quasi-synonyms."
41. See Bernhard, 1968-1969: 55. See also Frauwallner, 1953: 197.
42. See Frauwallner, 1953: 211; Bernhard, 1968-1969: 56.
43. See Bernhard, 1968-1969: 57-60. For other opinions on the matter: see Kimura, 1968: 363 ff. See also Cox, 1993: 122.

44. T.1552: 935c4 and 935c7-8.
45. For instance in *Suttanipāta*, Andersen and Smith (Eds.), 1848: 141 ff. (*Suttanipāta*: 728 ff.).
46. MN 28 *Mahāhattipadopamasutta* (Trenckner (Ed.), 1888: 190-191). Cf. SN 12.21 *Dasabalasutta* (Feer (Ed.), 1960: 27-28).
47. SN 12.58 *Nāmarūpasutta* (Feer (Ed.), 1960: 90-91); SN 12.59 *Viññāṇasutta* (Feer (Ed.), 1960: 91); SN 12.64 *Atthirāgasutta* (Feer (Ed.), 1960: 101-104). See also Cox, 1993: 139, note #20. See also footnote 39.
48. Wayman, 1980: 275.
49. See Wayman, 1980: 276: Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamakakārikā* XXIV,40 runs: "The one who sees dependent origination, sees this precisely as suffering and the source, precisely as cessation and path." (*Yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaṃ paśyatīdaṃ sa paśyati, duḥkhaṃ samudayaṃ caiva nirodhaṃ mārgam eva ca* - Kalupahana, 1996: 353).
50. On the development of the theory of the aggregates from the scope of the five senses (*āyatana*): see Przyluski, 1939: 1-2.
51. T.1552: 925b29-c1.
52. Yamada, 1980: 382-383. See also Sasaki, 1956: 186.
53. See Sasaki, 1956: 187 for the translation.
54. On the mirror-simile, see Wayman, 1974(a): 260 and Demiéville, 1947. See also Przyluski, 1939: 2-3.
55. Sasaki, 1956: 190. See also de La Vallée Poussin, 1902: 259-260, 263-265, 281.
56. See Sasaki, 1956: 197.
57. de La Vallée Poussin, 1971: Vol.1, 21,note #1: "vikṣiptācittakasyāpi yo 'nubandhaḥ śubhāśubhaḥ / mahābhūtāny upādāya sā hy avijñaptir ucyate //"
58. See de La Vallée Poussin, 1971: Vol.1, 20. See also Gokhale, 1938: 69.
59. T.1670B: 711c11-712a1.
60. T.1670B: 711c15-711c15.
61. T.1670B: 712a20-b2.
62. See Takakusu, 1904-1905: 68-69 and Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 39-59.
63. T.1536: 367c22-23: categorization of the four forms of nutriment (*āhāra*); 369a3-4: categorization of formations of the duration of life (*āyuḥsaṃskāra*); 419a20-22: categorization of mental afflictions (*cetovinibandha*). See also Stache-Rosen, 1968: 46, 48, 137-141 resp.. See also Cox, 1993: 127.

64. T.1537: 491c18-20 and 492b4-7: categorization of the member of enlightenment investigation into factors (*dharmapravicayasaṃbodhyaṇga*). See Cox, 1993: 140, note # 29.
65. T.1537: 505a9-513c10.
66. T.1537: 505a29-b13 and 505c26-513c10. See also Dietz, 1984: 25-70; Cox, 1993: 128.
67. See Cox, 1993: 129-130.
68. T. 1537: 505a10 ff.. See also Cox, 1993: 127-132.
69. DN 15 *Mahānidānasuttanta* (Rhys Davids and Estlin Carpenter (Eds.), 1947: 56).
70. See Yamada, 1980: 388, note # 11; Willemen, Dessein, Cox, 1998: 182.
71. See Yoshimoto, in Potter (Ed.), 1996: 317-325.
72. See Yamada, 1980: 378.
73. T.1537: p.505b14 ff.
74. Cox, 1993: 130-131.
75. Cox, 1993: 131; Dietz, 1984: 32-35; 37-40; 40-43; 60-61 resp..
76. T.1542: 711c6-7.
77. T.1540: 547a3 ff..
78. See Cox, 1993: 132 ff..
79. T.1539: 547a3-9.
80. T.1539: 547a3-9.
81. T.1539: 547a16-25. See also Cox, 1993: 133-134.
82. T.1544: 920c5-921a10. See Cox, 1993, p.136. A start for this was already to be noticed in the *Vijñānakāya* (547b22 ff.), where four causes are isolated from a list of 14 mentioned in respect to dependent origination and that are used to explain the varieties of forms of consciousness. See Cox, 1993, p.134.
83. T.1544: 921b16-c23.
84. A commentary in Tibetan on the *Jñānaprasthāna*, commentary entitled *Arthaviniścayaṭīkā*, refers to the *Jñānaprasthāna* for the teaching that there are two kinds of dependent origination - with prolonged character (= *āvasthika*) and with transient character (= *prākarṣika*). The kind with prolonged character refers to three lives. The kind with transient character refers to the transient or fleeting arising of all twelve members. See Wayman, 1970-1971: 189 ff..
85. See T.1552: 882c28-885c8.
86. See Cox, 1993: 136-137.
87. See Frauwallner, 1971: 86; Willemen, 1975: ii; Dessein, 1996: 647.
88. T.1552: 935b14-936a21. Cp. T.1550: 826c21-827a11; T.1551: 860b26-c20; T.1553: 970c26-29 and 971a2-9.

89. See note 40.
90. See T.1539: 547a3-9.
91. Notice that the **Abhidharmāmṛtarasaśāstra* speaks of forms of frustrations (*duḥkha*) in this respect (T.1553: 870c26-29).
92. Ñyāṇatiloka (1987: 129) explains that members 1 and 2 are "karma process," 3 -7 are "rebirth process," 8-10 are "karma process," and 11 and 12 are "rebirth process". In the present life, first come members 3-7 which are the fruition of causes established in the previous life or lives, and then come members 8-10 which are 'new karma' and the cause of events in the next life. This division as to the three periods of time is peculiar for the Vaibhāṣika interpretation of the members in sets of 2, 5, 3 and 2. See Wayman, 1970-1971: 187-188.
93. See note 43.
94. Wayman, 1970-71: .186ff..
95. Also Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* has this two-five-three-two division. See de La Vallée Poussin, 1971: vol.2, 68-70.
96. That such a section with a fourfold interpretation is not in Dharmaśreṣthin's **Abhidharmahṛdaya* may again prove that the work is older than the *Jñānaprasthāna*. See note 87.
97. See Fukuhara, 1965: 17; Sakamoto, 1981: 270.
98. See in this respect: de La Vallée Poussin, 1913: 41.
99. See de La Vallée Poussin, 1913: 38.
100. I.e. gods (*deva*), humans (*manuṣya*), animals (*tiryagyoni*), hungry ghosts (*preta*), and beings in hell (*naraka*).
101. T.1552: 964b24-c3. On the importance of 'intermediate existence' (*antarābhava*) in Sarvāstivāda philosophy: see Fukuhara, 1965: 37-38.
102. MA 151 (T.1, No.151: 663b25-666c12), MN II,157.
103. I.e. when coming from the '*gandharvas*'. Cp. Pradhan, 1975: 121,25-122,1. See MA 151 (T.1: 666a13-15).
104. T.1552: 962c17-963a20.

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NO SELF, "SELF", AND NEITHER-SELF-NOR-NON-SELF IN MAHĀYĀNA WRITINGS OF VASUBANDHU

Stefan Anacker (Porrentruy)

The Buddha already had explained that a fixed entity "self" ("ego", "soul", etc.) does not exist, and that what is so designated is really aggregates of momentary events, forming series related by cause and effect. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, however, the term "selflessness" is expanded to include not only the selflessness of a "personality" (*pudgala-nairātmya*), but also the selflessness, or the absence of fixed natures, in the momentary events themselves (*dharma-nairātmya*). Vasubandhu, the famous Buddhist philosopher of the fourth century[1], has applied his genius in various works not only to demonstrate that a self cannot exist, but also to explain why there is a sense of "self" in the absence of self, and, finally, why a fixed belief in no self may be as limiting as a belief in self!

To prove the non-existence of self, Vasubandhu has evolved his most elaborate argumentation in his Commentary on the Ornament to the Mahāyāna sūtras (by Maitreya/Asanga)[2], XVIII,92-103. The selflessness which is here discussed is essentially "the selflessness of personality". Vasubandhu here states that a personality can exist only as a designation (*prajñaptitas*), and not as a true entity (*dravyatas*). It cannot exist as an entity because it is not apprehended as a separate kind of entity. On the other hand, the aggregate of materiality (*rūpa*) which, making up the body of a "person", constitutes one of the types of aggregates making up what is conventionally called "a personality", can be apprehended as a separate kind of aggregate of entities. Even those who assert that there is a self themselves cannot directly perceive a self, and such a view occurs only when there is a superimposition of a "self" on the aggregates, which is an affliction (*kleśa*), with its subsequent afflictions (*saṁkleśa*) of assuming an "I" or "mine".

The impulsion for the theory of self is that there should be one seer, hearer, smeller, taster, tactiley feeler, cognizer, doer, enjoyer, knower, liberator (i.e. one who can be liberated from the cycle of re-births). But since all this is dependent on visual, etc., consciousness, there is no central "doer", and certainly no controllerness (*svāmitva*). Furthermore, if there is a self, it should have an activity (*karma*), like the eye, etc., has the activity of seeing, etc.. But none can be found for it. If the self is behind all the senses, it is difficult to see how sense-perception could occur either without or with an effort. If with an effort, what is the use of another effort which the self might be exercising? But since the self is self-existent (*svayambhū*), according to those who believe in it, there should be no effort connected with it.

But this would mean that sense-perception takes place without causes or conditions! In fact, sense-perception takes place only with a certain effort of the eye, etc., the presence of the visual object, etc., and contact of the eye, etc., with this visual object, etc.. If a permanent self is behind all sense-perceptions, its action would have to be permanent, too, thus the action of seeing, etc., would also be permanent. There can be no permanent activity exercised by the self in relation to sense-perception, because if it is assumed that the effort involved in sense-perception depends on the self, since the self is permanent, its being a condition for an event which occurs only at one time, and is impermanent, is not logical (*na yujyate*). The effort did not exist before, thus if the self is its cause, the self itself cannot always exist.

The processes of affliction (*saṁkleśa*) and alleviation (*vyavadāna*), central to the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism, are also impossible if there is an unchanging self, since these processes imply a series of momentary events. Really, one may ask? Yes, because if each moment is not different from the next, everything would constantly remain the same. Furthermore, if the self is sovereign and self-illuminating, liberation would come without any effort. On the other hand, if a self really existed, the cravings and other afflictions which are linked with assuming an "I" or assuming a "mine" would always exist, and thus liberation would be impossible (since to the Buddhist, liberation means also liberation from the notion of "I"). Vasubandhu makes the interesting comment that the view of self does in fact not even exist in all observed sentient beings.

Similar arguments against a self are given by Vasubandhu in his Demonstration of Action.[3] If the self is single and without change, it is impossible to see how sense-perceptions and their impressions (i.e. memories, recognitions, etc.) could take place at all. Since the self is unchanging, it can also not be "impressed". In what way may it be claimed that sense-perceptions are subject to the self? If this were the case, all sense-perceptions should arise all the time, and not intermittently, since "there are no transformations in the self". If it is claimed that the actual arising of a sense-perception depends on other auxiliary causes, why should these causes be accepted, since it is claimed that sense-perception takes place because of the self? It may be argued that some stability is necessary for our sense of continuity as organisms, but in fact all the factors which make up what is called a personality are momentary, and it is their traces in the present moment which give rise to the sense of continuity.

But if the process of sense-impression, and change in general, seem impossible if an unchanging self is assumed, they are also difficult to relate to a series of momentary events. In his supplement to the Abhidharma-kośa[4], Vasubandhu had stated that a moment of sense-perception leaves a trace, which makes memory pos-

sible. Karmic retribution could also be explained by these traces. An action which carries a retributional result arises as follows: a memory makes the desire to act arise, and from this desire to act arises an initial mental application (*vitarka*), and from this initial mental application there arises an effort, which through the motile element (*vāyu-dhātu*) puts the body "into motion". There is no room for a self in this process. To explain karmic retribution, Vasubandhu had here stated that the initial action, or the volition (*cetanā*) of the action, leaves a trace which causes a transformation of the aggregate-series, i.e. the organism. He says that the force of retribution is thus rather like the case where a lemon flower is dyed red, and this gives rise to a transformation in the series flower-fruit which has the result that the center of the lemon arising from this flower will also be red. This latent force to transform the series is given the metaphorical designation "seed".

These early Vasubandhu explanations of karmic retribution and "psychic" continuity met with severe attacks from the orthodox Vaibhāṣika philosopher Sanghabhadra.[5] As regards the first point, Sanghabhadra objects that an action cannot be the beginning point of a gradual transformation of the aggregate-series, because the trace of the act and the simultaneous consciousness-moment may be totally different in character. A beneficial consciousness-moment is followed by a series of other consciousness-moments of which the last is supposed to have the force projected by the past act to produce an agreeable sensation as retribution for the beneficial action. But directly antecedent to this karmic result of an agreeable sensation, an unbeneficial consciousness-moment could have occurred! Each action must have an effect distinct from consciousness-moments, Sanghabhadra concludes, otherwise an unbeneficial consciousness-moment could never exist once a beneficial one has occurred. To attack Vasubandhu's idea of "seeds" or traces left by past perceptions in the consciousness-stream, as an explanation for our sense of "psychic" continuity, Sanghabhadra brings up the example of the meditational concentration where there are no volitions and cognitions, and thus, at least to most Ābhidharmikas, no consciousness, either. Hence trances in a consciousness-stream are inadequate to explain the sense of "psychic" continuity between the last moment of consciousness before the meditational attainment. All consciousnesses have been stopped in the attainment, thus traces left in consciousness cannot explain how "the practitioner" can emerge from the meditational attainment and still have memories of events before the meditational attainment.

Vasubandhu replies to these objections of Sanghabhadra in his Demonstration of Action. His solution is to introduce the "store-house consciousness" (*ālaya-vijñāna*) which had been described by his brother Asanga in his Compendium of Mahāyāna[6]. This storehouse-consciousness is a series of moment-events which underlies all the other consciousness-moments. Whereas all the other conscious-

nesses are necessarily absent during the meditational attainment where there are no volitions and cognitions, the storehouse-consciousness continues during this state. As it contains all the "seeds" (or impressions, or traces) of the other consciousnesses, there is no severance of memory even during this meditational "interruption" where all the other consciousnesses are not functioning.

Vasubandhu in this work also uses the storehouse-consciousness to explain karmic retribution. The retribution of a past act is explained as follows: the volition of that act influences the storehouse-consciousness (it "leaves a seed"), and with the maturation of that seed, there is a pleasurable or unpleasurable effect in a fully conscious form. The fact that the consciousness-moment antecedent or concomitant to this effect may be beneficial, whereas the result is itself painful (or vice-versa), is no longer a problem, since the pain can be traced back to the unbeneficiality of the volition which left a "seed" in the storehouse-consciousness. Vasubandhu states that several "Hīnayāna" schools have accepted such an underlying consciousness, and cites in particular the Theravādins and the Mahāsāṅghikas. He says that retribution of "one life to the next" is also impossible without assuming such a storehouse-consciousness, which is in fact the link between "the two lives".

But the storehouse-consciousness should not be confused with a self, though it is in the underlying reason for our belief in a self. "It" consists of momentary events and is in fact constantly different from one moment to the next, due to the impressions left by the other consciousnesses. Vasubandhu makes this point perhaps most clearly in his Commentary on the Compendium of Mahāyāna[7] by Asanga. Innumerable transformations are in fact going on in the storehouse-consciousness all the time -- it is not an entity, but a series of aggregated moment-events each of which is different from the next. Sanghabhadra had objected that Vasubandhu by rights couldn't speak of "series" at all, since only the present moment exists for him! In fact, Vasubandhu in his Discussion of the Five Aggregates[8] admits that "series" is only a metaphor for the phenomenon of one aggregate-moment's arising when the other has ceased, and being causally linked to the previous one.

But this matter of "being causally linked to the previous one" is in itself a problem for Vasubandhu, who maintains that only the present moment exists. In fact, Vasubandhu admits in his Commentary on the Compendium of Mahāyāna that it is not possible for a past moment to influence a present moment, because it does not exist (p.279,3). But, in that case, it seems that the storehouse-consciousness cannot be used to explain our sense of continuity, since "it" is really a series of moment-events, and even this "series" must be taken metaphorically! But, following Asanga in his Compendium of Mahāyāna I 17, Vasubandhu maintains that the impression left by a consciousness-moment is simultaneous with the consciousness-

moment itself. Since the storehouse-consciousness is "itself" constantly different from one moment to the next, and is in fact not an "entity" at all, it is not a self, though it explains our sense of "self"!

In his famous Thirty Verses[9], Vasubandhu explains that not only the metaphor of self, but also the metaphor of moment-events themselves, occur only because of the transformations of consciousness, i.e. the five sensory consciousnesses, the mental consciousness, the manas which gives rise to an idea of "I" and which has the storehouse-consciousness as its object (but which can be eliminated in the Buddhist path), and the storehouse-consciousness itself. Each sensory or mental consciousness-moment leaves a simultaneous impression in the storehouse-consciousness, but the storehouse-consciousness also influences the present consciousness-moment through its "seeds", so that an objective reality is never possible.

In the Twenty Verses[10], it is stated that the "same moment" will be perceived in different ways by various consciousnesses pertaining to different organisms, and that perceptions can arise without an external object, as in the case of dreams. Thus Vasubandhu arrives at perception-only, which has often been misunderstood, for in Vasubandhu's writings this never means that consciousness unilaterally creates all experiences, but rather that our experiences are always essentially "internal" events, colored by the storehouse-consciousness' "seeds". Thus it is actually impossible to distinguish "common-sense reality" from a hallucination! Our only "guarantee" for the "validity" of our perceptions is their consistency with traces of past perceptions. It may be argued that these traces still cannot explain our sense of "psychic" continuity, but in fact they can. Each consciousness-moment leaves a trace simultaneously in the storehouse-consciousness, where that trace has the effect of producing further latent traces never totally identical with their predecessors.

Whenever a fixed discrimination is made in the play of consciousnesses, something is being left out of the total picture, and something else is being superimposed. This is why Vasubandhu in his Thirty Verses says that all mental discriminations are mentally constructed (*parikalpita*), and do not reflect true reality. It might be asked how "true reality" can be spoken of at all in this context, but for Vasubandhu this means recognizing the absence of self or fixed natures in all perceptions. Even to say "perception-only" is not possible, since this is also a mental construction. It is when consciousness perceives no object of consciousness that it is in consciousness-only, but this means also that there is no consciousness, since nothing is apprehended. (Thirty Verses 20, 25-30; see also Commentary on the Separation of the Middle from Extremes I,3, cf. also Commentary on the Separation of Dharma and Dharmatā, p.40; Commentary on the Compendium of Mahāyāna ad III 15-22, Tib. p.295,1,1)[11]. Thus it is that Vasubandhu in his Commentary on the

Compendium of Mahāyāna can make this surprising statement: "Those who have realized ultimate truth see no basis for holding on to different 'self-natures', see no storehouse consciousness, see no accumulation of traces, see no consciousness, see no eye, see no visible, see no visual consciousness or any other consciousness or their organs and objects, see no moment-events. Only those who don't see any of this can be called skilled in ultimate truth." (p.276,1,1). As is explained in the Commentary on the Separation of the Middle from Extremes, I, 18, everything is empty of a fixed nature, and the only reason Mahāyānists ever say anything at all is for therapeutic purposes, since all conceptions are void. That is to say, "consciousness-streams" (to use another metaphor!) which have experienced non-discriminatory knowledge (*nirvikalpaka-jñāna*) may subsequent to this knowledge again use concepts, for therapeutic, and general life, purposes, even though it is now known that they are fundamentally empty. This is the "subsequently attained knowledge" (*pṛṣtha-labdha-jñāna*) most clearly defined by Vasubandhu perhaps in his Commentary on the Separation of Dharma and Dharmatā (p.39) as "knowing knowables with the memory of a previous non-discriminatory knowledge, even though the consciousnesses of these subsequently attained knowledges have again focuses and discriminations". But these are no longer clung to.

On the question of how non-discriminatory knowledge itself arises, Vasubandhu is very optimistic: he says any consciousness-moment can potentially realize non-discriminatory knowledge. This is why Vasubandhu can speak of "a revolution at the basis through the Suchness of the ordinary environmental world" (Commentary on the Separation of Dharma and Dharmatā, pp.31-32). "A revolution at the basis" (*āśraya-parāvṛtti*) means that the "basis", i.e. the storehouse-consciousness, has been freed temporarily from its "seeds"; on the conscious level, it means non-discriminatory knowledge. On the point that even "an ordinary experience" may be a non-discriminatory awareness, Vasubandhu is very emphatic, stating in the Commentary on the Separation of Dharma and Dharmatā that a revolution at the basis can take place in any moment (p.45), in his Commentary on the Ornament to the Mahāyāna sūtras, IX 4-5, that any moment can be a Buddha-dharma, because each may reveal Suchness, i.e. Emptiness, i.e. the absence of any fixed natures in phenomena, and in his Teaching of the Three Own-Beings[12] that the realization of Emptiness can occur in the state of mental construction itself (verses 24-25).

Nonetheless, non-discriminatory knowledge means that all mental constructions are no longer present. So also with the mental construction of non-self. This is why Vasubandhu, in his Commentary on the Separation of the Middle from Extremes -- the "Middle" being the Middle Path of Buddhism, can say, "To say that there is a difference between the aggregates and the self is an extreme, and to say

that there is an identity between them is also an extreme. In order to avoid these extremes, there is a middle path, where there is no view of 'self', and no view of 'humanity'.-- 'There is a self' is the extreme of superimposing a fixed personality, and the extreme of denial is to say that 'All is without a self'. In order to avoid these extremes, there is the middle path, which is a knowledge free from mental discriminations standing midway between maintaining self and non-self." (ad V,23). In other words, since all verbal formulations and even all mental discriminations are void in non-discriminatory knowledge, the doctrine of "non-self" is as invalid as the doctrine of self.

Vasubandhu never denies that the aggregate-theory is the best way to explain "individuality" as long as theorizing is being done, but in the highest knowledge there are no theories at all, and certainly no statements regarding something's being or non-being. "An object of consciousness is to be regarded like a magical illusion," he says (Commentary on the Separation of the Middle from Extremes, ad V,18), "A magical illusion does not exist with the true appearance of an elephant, etc., being produced in the spectators' vision during a magical show, and yet doesn't not exist, because the illusion itself exists. Because of looking at 'objects' like magical creations, etc., and by the word 'etc.', mirages, dreams, the moon reflected in the water, and other examples are intended, mental factors observe without gliding to the very conceptions of 'being' and 'non-being'." In another work, the Commentary on the Separation of Dharma and Dharmatā, "dharma" being the moment-event, and 'dharmatā' that which lies behind it, Vasubandhu says, "Dharmas and Dharmatā could be differentiated if the non-existent and the existent could be differentiated, because Dharmatā is only realized when there are no dharmas, and when objects apprehended, etc., are not differentiated, but the existent and the non-existent really cannot be differentiated." (p.25).

These ideas, and anti-ideas, are of great therapeutic use. The recognition that our perception of "reality" is always incomplete and subjective, makes dogmatism impossible. And historically, we are after all colonial protozoa (and these protozoa still show their individual intelligences, such as the generals of the white corpuscle army which are the target of that strangely intelligent AIDS virus), and these cells themselves can be further analyzed into atomic particles and sub-particles, thus the aggregate-theory, "the best as long as theorizing is being done", seems valid. The categorization of "individuals" so rampant in Occidental psychology, becomes impossible -- a dynamic everchanging universe is seen, which means changes can also be made radically, and for the better.

Notes

1. Since the publication of Erich Frauwallner's On the Date of the Buddhist Master of the Law Vasubandhu, Istituto per studie del medio ed estremo oriente, Rome, 1951, there has been some doubt whether there was one Vasubandhu, or two (perhaps more!). All while knowing that the selflessness of personalities makes such debates futile, the present author supports the traditional view of one great philosopher Vasubandhu, who was first a "Hīnayāna" Abhidharma master (Abhidharma-kośa) and then became converted by his brother Asanga to the Mahāyāna. From the internal evidence of the works which are ascribed to Vasubandhu, all of them seem to be by one author.
2. The Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra-bhāsya. The Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra, or Ornament to the Mahāyāna Sūtras, is traditionally considered to be one of the five treatises of Maitreya, or Maitreyanātha. Asanga is said to have transmitted these treatises to his brother Vasubandhu. Vasubandhu himself distinguishes the author of the Separation of the Middle from Extremes, Maitreyanātha, from its "expounder to us and others", Asanga. (Commentary on the Separation of the Middle from Extremes, I, introductory verse). Some scholars nonetheless believe that the "works of Maitreya" are in fact by Asanga, thus I designate the author of the five treatises as "Maitreya/Asanga".
3. The Karma-siddhi-prakarana. Translations into French by Lamotte from the Chinese (Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques, 4, 1936, pp. 151 ff.) and by Anacker into English from the Tibetan (Seven Works of Vasubandhu, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1984, pp. 94 ff.). The Sanskrit original no longer exists.
4. The ninth chapter of the Abhidharma-kośa seems to have been originally an independent treatise, and was perhaps written before the Abhidharma-kośa, as its arguments and solutions seem less "advanced". The translation of the Abhidharma-kośa into French by Louis de La Vallée Poussin (Geunther, Paris, 1924), is still authoritative, even though in the meantime the Sanskrit original has been found.
5. The Vaibhāṣika's were a "Hīnayāna" Buddhist school that took the Mahāvibhāsa (second century A.D.) as its authoritative text. The Vaibhāsikas were Sarvāstivādins, i.e. believers in the existence of the past and the future. Vasubandhu was originally in this tradition and wrote the Abhidharma-kośa from a Vaibhāsika point of view, but his autocommentary on the Abhidharma-kośa criticizes Vaibhāsika philosophy. Sanghabhadra, a

contemporary of Vasubandhu, attacked Vasubandhu's commentary on the Abhidharma-kośa in his Abhidharma-nyāyānusāra. La Vallée Poussin translated some chapters of this work into French (Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient XXX, Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques 5), Collett Cox has translated larger portions of this work into English (Disputed Dharmas -- Early Buddhist theories on Existence, Tokyo, 1995).

6. Mahāyāna- samgraha of Asanga, translated into French by Lamotte, Muséon, Louvain, 1938.
7. The Mahāyāna-saṁgraha- bhāṣya.
8. The Pañcaskandhaka-prakarana, translated into French from the Chinese by Dantinne, and from the Tibetan into English by Anacker (Seven Works of Vasubandhu, pp. 64 ff.). The Sanskrit original is lost.
9. The Triṁśikā-kārikā. The Sanskrit is extant. Many editions and translations of this work exist.
10. The Viṁśatikā-kārikā with its autocommentary by Vasubandhu. The Sanskrit exists, and there are many editions and translations.
11. The commentaries on the following "works of Maitreya" are by Vasubandhu: the Ornament to the Mahāyāna sūtras, the Separation of the Middle from Extremes (Madhyānta-vibhāga), and the Separation of Dharma and Dharmatā (Dharma-dharmatā-vibhāga). All exist in Sanskrit, though the complete Sanskrit text of the last of these has never been published. The Commentary on the Separation of the Middle from Extremes has been translated into English by T.A. Kochumuttom, in A Buddhist Doctrine of Experience, and by Anacker in Seven Works of Vasubandhu, pp. 211 ff., both published by Motilal Banarsidass in 1984. A summary of the Commentary on the Separation of Dharma and Dharmatā is given by Anacker in Etudes Asiatiques XLVI 1, 1992, Etudes bouddhiques offertes à Jacques May.
12. Tri-svabhāva-nirdeśa. The Sanskrit text is edited and translated into French by La Vallée Poussin, Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques 2, into English by Kochumuttom (in A Buddhist Doctrine of Experience) and by Anacker (Seven Works of Vasubandhu, pp. 291 ff.).

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Triṁśika-kārikā (Thirty Verses) (cf. note 9).

Tri-svabhāva-nirdeśa (Teaching of the Three Own-Beings) (see note 12).

Viṁśatikā-kārikā and vṛtti (Twenty Verses and their commentary) (see note 10).

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"THERE IS NO SELF" (NÂTMÂSTI) - SOME OBSERVATIONS FROM VASUBANDHU'S ABHIDHARMAKOŚA AND THE YUKTIDĪPIKĀ

Marek Mejor (Warsaw)

Introduction

§ 1. Denial of a self (or a soul, person, individual, etc.)[1] is one of the main tenets of the Buddhist doctrine. No wonder than that the problem of a self was so vigorously discussed by the Buddhist thinkers. What is more, there were also followers of Buddhism who claimed existence of some kind of a person (*pudgala*), the so-called pudgalavādins.[2] No original text of these Buddhists-personalists has been preserved, except the short polemics included into early Buddhist works like *Kathāvatthu* and *Vijñānakāya*. However, it is the *Pudgalaviniścaya*, being the ninth chapter of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* (ca. 450), which is regarded as the basic detailed critical exposition of the heresy of pudgalavādins.[3] A criticism of their positions contains also Śāntarakśita's *Tattvasaṃgraha*, together with Kamalaśīla's *Pañjikā* thereon (ca. 750).[4] A critical examination of the notion of a self one can find in Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* and *Madhyamakâvatāra* (ca. 650), in Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (with Prajñākaramati's Pañjikā) (ca. 750), and in other works.[5]

The present paper aims at pointing out some textual coincidences between Vasubandhu's AKBh (with occasional references to other texts) and the *Yuktidīpikā*, which prove that the Yuktidīpikā-kāra used the former. It consists of two parts: first, the main positions of Vasubandhu concerning the problem of a self are analyzed (the passages from AKBh ad III.18-20, and the beginning of AKBh IX are given in translation from the Sanskrit), then the relevant parts of the YD are examined (here too, the passages are translated) in juxtaposition to the passages from AKBh. Additional references are given in the Appendix.

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criticism of a draft of the paper, and to Miss Monika Nowakowska for her corrections of the final version.

I. Abhidharmakośa

§ 2. There are two places in the AKBh where Vasubandhu rejected the view claiming the real existence of a self (*ātmavāda*). First Vasubandhu included his refutation of *ātman* in the third chapter of the AKBh (III.18).[6] It is inserted here into the explanation of the process of transmigration and the concept of the intermediate being (*antarābhava*). A vital question for the Buddhists was who (or what) does actually transmigrate from one life into another, provided that there is no separate permanent entity subject to rebirth. Vasubandhu's answer to the query by the "outsiders" (*bāhyaka*) is unequivocal - there is no self.
The AK III.18 says:

> "There is no self and it is only [the continuum of] the aggregates formed/stimulated by the [previously accumulated] afflictions and actions which, by means of a stream of intermediate being, enters [mother's] womb; like the light".

In the following commentary Vasubandhu's argument is based on the scriptural authority. The relevant passage is quoted from the *Paramārthaśūnyatāsūtra* of the Saṃyukta Āgama.[7] It is interesting to observe that the Buddha allows the interpretation of the notion of a self as a mere verbal convention applied to the dharma theory, i.e. the theory of ultimate factors of existence. The notion of a self as a separate permanent entity, a carrier or conveyor of personality which passes from one life into another future life, is strongly rejected. However, one is allowed to speak about a self in terms of the dharma convention (*dharma-saṃketa*).[8] It is then possible to apply metaphorically the notion of a self to the stream of factors, which are formed by the sum of defilements and deeds/actions by means of a series of intermediate states of existence. Such a continuous series of intermediate states of existence is regarded as the dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*), which is spread over three consecutive lifetimes: past, present and future.

Vasubandhu's argument is related to the question whether the aggregates (*skandha*) are identical with a self, or separate from it.[9] The doctrine of non-existence of a self (*nairātmya*) is, as it were, conjoined with the doctrine of dependent origination (see also Vasubandhu's PSVy, Appendix).

§ 3. Next, in the ninth chapter of his AKBh (*Pudgalaviniścaya*), Vasubandhu pursued a systematic criticism of the notion of a person (*pudgala*) or a self (*ātman*).

Here, first the argument is based on logical premises.[10] There is no self, there is no person, etc., because such thing is not subject to cognition by any of the accepted means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). Vasubandhu's argument is directed mostly against the Buddhists-personalists (*pudgalavādin*), who accepted existence of a certain form of being which underlies the human personality. But it is also directed against the Sāṃkhya followers who accepted the possibility of cognition of a spirit (a self) by means of a special type of inference, the so-called *sāmānyatodṛṣṭam anumānam* (see Wezler 1969; Nenninger). Several questions raised by the opponent(s)[11] in the AKBh IX refer to and develop the short explanation in the AKBh III.18ff., and may also reflect the exposition of the SK 17.[12]

Vasubandhu argues that a self does not exist, because it is not perceived by any means of valid cognition. A polemics against this argument is found in the *Yuktidīpikā*. From the Buddhist scriptural quotations inserted into the *Yuktidīpikā* it follows that the Yuktidīpikā-kāra must have referred to Vasubandhu's AKBh IX where we find the same passages (see the Appendix).

Abhidharmakośa III.18-20

[Ed. Pradhan 129.5ff.; Shastri 432.8ff.; P Tanjur, Gu., fol. 142bff.]

Translation:

"Now here, in that matter, the non-Buddhists[13], considering the doctrine [of the existence] of a self (*ātma-vāda*)[14], raise [the following] objection: -

If it is admitted that a sentient being passes over into another life, then it proves that a self does exist.

That one is driven away [with the following statement]:

There is no self.[15]

What kind of a self? - That one which is supposed (*parikalpyate*) to cast down these [aggregates] and to put on again those aggregates (*skandha*); such one does not exist, a spirit, an internal agent (*antarvyāpārapuruṣa*)[16].

And thus it was said by the Blessed One [in the *Paramārthaśūnyatā-dharmaparyāya*]:

> «There is action, there is result, but the doer is not perceived who casts down these aggregates and puts on again other aggregates, except the dharma-convention (*dharma-saṃketa*)[17]. Here, this dharma-convention means: when this exists, that exists too, i.e. in full - the dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*).»[18]

Then, what kind of a self is not rejected?

But [it is] the aggregates only...

When the aggregates as such (*skandha-mātram*)[19] are metaphorically regarded

(*upacaryate*)[20] as a self, [in such case] there is no objection.[21]

Thus, in that case it follows that just the aggregates (*skandhā eva*) pass over to another world (life). But the aggregates as such (*skandha-mātram*) do not pass over there.

[In answer to that it is said:]

> Formed by defilements (*kleśa*) and actions (*karman*), by means of a continuous series of intermediate existences, [the aggregates] go into [a mother's] womb, like a flame [of a lamp].

For the aggregates are momentary and they have no power (potency) (*śakti*) [of their own] to pass over [to the next existence]. But it is the [mental] defilements as such (*kleśa-mātram*), completely pervaded (*paribhāvita*, BHSD 328) both by the defilements and actions, which go into a mother's womb as a continuous series (*saṃtati*) under the appellation of the intermediate state of existence (*antarābhava*, BHSD 39).

As for example the flame [of a lamp], even though it is momentary (*kṣaṇika*), [it goes] into a different place [= changes its position each and every moment] by means of a continuous series [of flashes]; therefore there is no fault [in our argument].[22]

Therefore, it is proved that even when there is no self, a continuous series of the aggregates, which is formed by the [totality of] defilements and actions, enters the mother's womb.

(129.21) Moreover, that [continuous series of the momentary aggregates -]

> According to the projecting force (*ākṣepa*), gradually grown up, the continuous series (*santāna*) again goes into another life by means of defilements and actions; thus the wheel of existence(s) is beginningless. (AK III.19)

For each continuous series of the aggregates has unequal projecting force (*ākṣepa*), because of different sum of actions (*karman*) relating to [a particular] life.[23] Therefore, as much one has [his] projecting force, that much, by degrees, has [his] growth (longevity). (...)

(130.24) In such manner life (origin) (*janman*) has defilements and actions as [its] cause (*kleśakarmahetuka*), then the defilements and actions have it [= life] as [their] cause, then in turn a new life [originates] from them - so the beginningless wheel of existence is to be known.

(130.25) If [you] admit [falsely] (imagine) a beginning, then it would follow that it [= life (birth)] is without cause in relation to these [defilements and actions]. And if it had no causal relation [to them], [analogically] all this would appear to be without cause. Yet it is observed [commonly] that there is efficacy (*sāmarthya*) of seeds, etc. in relation to sprouts, etc., due to the determination by place and time (*deśakāla-*

pratiniyama), or, [one can see the efficacy of] fire, etc. in relation to what is produced by cooking (by warmth) (*pākaja*), etc. Therefore there is no appearance (manifestation) (*prādurbhāva*) without cause (*nirhetuka*). And the theory [maintaining] the existence of eternal cause (*nityakāraṇāstitvavāda*) was previously rejected [= AK II.64d]. Therefore, there is no beginning of [the wheel of] transmigration.

But it is right [to speak about] the end (*anta*) [of the wheel of existence], on account of destruction of [its] cause (*hetukṣaya*), because of subjection of life (origin) to the cause (*hetvadhīnatva*), like that of a sprout, on account of destruction of the seed.

(131.3) This continuous stream of aggregates which was specified to be (specified as) a state of the three existences (lifetimes) (*janmatrayāvastha*):

> It is the d ependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*), consisting of three parts and twelve members: in the first and the posterior [parts] there are two [members in each], in the middle [there are] eight [members]; [this refers only to the person who has] completed (accomplished fully) (*paripūrin*)[24] [the states of existence in the sphere of desire (*kāmāvacāra*)]." (AK III.20)

Accordingly, it is explained in the AKBh (131.5ff.) that the first two members, ignorance and formations, belong to the prior part, i.e. the past life; the following eight members of the chain, viz. consciousness, name and form, six bases [of cognition], contact, feeling, desire, attachment, and existence, belong to the middle part, i.e. the present life; and the remaining two [members], birth and old age and death, belong to the posterior part, i.e. the future life.[25]

AKBh IX: Pudgalaviniścaya

> [AKBh IX, ed. Pradhan, 461.1-12; Shastri, 1189.1-1191.2; P Tanjur, Ngu., fol. 93b7-94a5. Ejima, p. 10. -- See LVP, Kośa, IX, pp. 230-232; Stcherbatsky, pp. 10-12. Cf. Oetke, p. 195.]

Translation:

"Is there, indeed, no other means of salvation from that [declared by the Buddhists]? - No, there is not. - Why? - Because [each one] is characterized by [its] sticking to (resting upon) the erroneous view of [the real existence of] a self (*vitathâtmadṛṣṭi*). For they [= its adherents] do not regard the conventional notion of a self (*ātmaprajñapti*) as a mere continuous series of the aggregates (*skandhasaṃtāna*), but they assume (imagine falsely) (*parikalpayanti*, BHSD 320,

321) a self as an independent real substance (*dravyântara*). And <all>[26] the impurities (*kleśa*) have their origin in [the idea of] accepting [existence of] a self (*ātmagrahaprabhāva*).

But what is meant [by the statement that] the term "self" refers to the continuous series of the aggregates only and not to [any] other object of designation (*abhidheya*)? - Because of absence of [the means of valid cognition, viz.] perception and inference (*pratyakṣânumānâbhāvāt*) [which could prove its existence]. For the factors which are existing are cognized by perception, provided that there is no obstacle ( ), as for instance [cognition] of the six objects and of the mind, and [they are cognized by] inference, as for instance [cognition] of the five sense faculties.
Here, [their] inference is as follows --

When the [general] cause is present and the other [= special] cause is absent, absence of the result is observed; and when it is present, [the result] is present [too].

As for instance - [in the case of] a sprout.

Or[27], when [both] the object has become manifest, and the attention of the mind as the [general] cause, are present[28], [in one case] the absence of grasping of the object is observed, and then, [in other case, its] presence is observed; as in the case of a blind, a deaf, etc., and as in the case of not blind, not deaf, etc. [respectively].

Hence, here too, the absence and presence of the other cause is ascertained. And the other [= special] cause it is the sense faculty - this is the inference.

But it is not so in relation to a self, [its existence cannot be proved in such a way, i.e. by perception or inference].

Thus, [the conclusion is:] a self does not exist."

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II. Yuktidīpikā

§ 4. The *Yuktidīpikā*, an anonymous commentary on the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, is one of the most important texts in the Sāṃkhya tradition.[29] Its great importance for the history of Indian philosophy in general has been acknowledged since long.[30] It was E. Frauwallner (Frauwallner 1959; cf. Oberhammer) who has shown its dependence on the earlier lost Sāṃkhya treatise, the *Ṣaṣṭitantra*.

The *Yuktidīpikā* contains many explicit references to the Buddhist views and bears clear evidence to its author's acquaintance with the Buddhists scriptures.[31] On the basis of the reference to Dignāga's definition of *pratyakṣa* (YD 35.1), and the lack of a reference to Dharmakīrti's definition who gave it its final form, which was then accepted by the Buddhists, it was suggested that the *Yuktidīpikā* may come

from the period between Dignāga (480-540 A.D., Frauwallner) and Dharmakīrti (600-660 A.D., Frauwallner). Wezler and Motegi assign its date to the period ca. 680-720 A.D.[32] and Trimśikā, and the *Abhidharmakósa*, especially its ninth chapter, the *Indgalaviniścaya.*

From the textual references in the *Yuktidīpikā* it clearly follows that its author must have known also the works of Vasubandhu on *vijñaptimātratā* - the *Viṃśatikā* and *Triṃśikā*,

In the following the relevant passages from the *Yuktidīpikā* will be translated and analysed, with references to the AKBh and other texts.

Yuktidīpikā ad SK 17

§ 5. The SK 17 esta blishes the existence of the spirit (*puruṣa*), as distinct from the nature (*pradhāna*). It offers five arguments in support of that thesis. In its commentary on SK 17, the Yuktidīpikā-kāra introduced an objection raised by the Buddhists, in which one can recognize the general argument put forth by Vasubandhu in his AKBh IX (see above): there is no self, because it is not cognizable by any means of valid cognition.[33] The most interesting is, however, the fact that the Yuktidīpikā-kāra not only refered to that argument, but also quoted the same Buddhist scriptural authorities, following Vasubandhu himself in his *Pudgalaviniścaya* (see the Appendix). In the following an annotated translation from the *Yuktidīpikā* (ed. Wezler-Motegi) will show that dependence.

Translation:
(167.2) "[The author] says, - The nature (*pradhāna*) has been explained. Now, it will be demonstrated (*pratipādya*) that there exists a spirit (*puruṣa*) which is different from cause and effect (*kāryakāraṇavyatirikta*).

Wherefore there may occur a doubt? - It was said [in the other place, cf. supra YD 89.19ff.]: because that which is not being apprehended (*anupalabhyamāna*) can be experienced in both ways (*ubhayathā*), [as existent or non-existent (*sadbhūta, asadbhūta*)].

Moreover, [the doubt may arise] on account of the opposing views of the teachers (*ācārya-vipratipatti*).

The followers of the Buddha (*śākyaputrīya*) are of the opinion (*pratipanna*) that there is no such thing (*nāsti kaścid artha*) [like a self, soul, or spirit, etc.] which is different from the aggregate of consciousness (*vijñāna-skandha-vyatirikta*).

Why? - Because of [its] non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*) by any means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*).[34]

Here, [in this world] whatever exists, is cognized by one of the means of valid

cognition: perception, etc. As for instance visible [object], etc. (*rūpâdi*). Then, to start with, that [kind of a] self is not cognized by perception.[35]

Why? - Because it is not characterized by a sound, etc. (*a-śabdâdi-lakṣaṇatvāt*).[36]

Nor [it is cognized] by inner perception (*antaḥ-pratyakṣa*).

Why? - Because that what is contrary to the three constituents/qualities (*tri-guṇa-viparīta*), and the rest, is not its object (the object of inner perception).

Neither [it is cognized by inference (*anumāna*)[37]] "as [observed] before" (*pūrvavat*) nor [by inference] "as the rest" (*śeṣavat*).

[Why? -] Because the relation of cause and effect is inapplicable (*anupapatti*) [in this case].

And [it is] not [cognized] by "cognition on the basis of a common character" (inference by analogy) (*sāmānyatodṛṣṭa*).[38]

[Why? -] Because of absence (non-existence) of a common element in form of a quality (*dharma-sāmānyâbhāva*).

And also [it is] not [cognized] by verbal authority (*āpta-vacana*).

[Why? -] Because of lack of assent (*anabhyupagama*).

Since the Buddhists do not acknowledge Vedic texts (*śruti*), tradition (*smṛti*), old history (*purāṇa*), and legend (*itihāsa*) as the means of valid cognition, and their Scripture (*Āgama*) [= *Kṣudraka Āgama*] says as follows:

(167.13)

> «For a self does not exist as a [real] self - it is [only] falsely imagined [to exist as a such].
> [Such entity like] a sentient being, and/or a self, does not exist here; there are but the factors which are conditioned by causes.
> There are only twelve parts of the state of existence, [which are classified as] [five] aggregates, [twelve] bases of cognition, and [eighteen] elements.
> Having considered all these [factors], [one must come to the conclusion that] a person (an individual) is not perceived [among them].
> Behold as void the internal, behold as void the external. Even that one who meditates upon voidness, whoever he may be, is not perceived.»[39]

(167.21) And again [it (the Scripture)] says: [Moreover, it was said in the *Paramārthaśunyatā-dharmaparyāya* §6:].[40]

> «There is action, there is result, but the doer is not perceived which casts down these aggregates and puts on again another aggregates, except the dharma convention (*dharma-saṃketa*).» --

Therefore [the conclusion of the Buddhists is:] a self does not exist (*nâstyātmêti*), because it is not apprehended by any of the means of valid cognition.[41]

(168.1) [Rejoinder:] As far as [your] statement is concerned, viz. that a self is not

apprehended by [direct] perception nor by [two kinds of inference, viz.] "as [observed] before" (*pūrvavat*) and "as the rest" (*śeṣavat*), it is true. But, as regards the statement that there is no "cognition on the basis of a common character" (inference by analogy) (*sāmānyatodṛṣṭa*), this is not reasonable (does not conform to correct reasoning) (*ayukta*)[42], because the common [quality] in the form of a self (*ātma-sāmānya*) is inapplicable (*anupapatti*).

Why? - (...)"

§ 6. To that question the answer brings the *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* 17, where the five arguments to establish the existence of a spirit (self) are put forward[43]:

> «Spirit as distinct from matter exists, since an assemblage of sensible objects is for another's use; since this other must be the reverse of everything composed of the three constituents; since there must be superintendence and control; since there must be some one to enjoy and since there is the activity for the purpose of liberation.»[44] (Mainkar, SK, Gauḍapāda, p. 93)

The five arguments which speak in favour of the existence of *puruṣa* are discussed by the Yuktidīpikā-kāra at length.[45] Here will be extracted from the *Yuktidīpikā* the relevant passages which bear on the question of the relationship to the AKBh. A summary of the discussion between the Sāṃkhyas and the Buddhists is also found in Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* IX.60d-62, with Prajñākaramati's *Pañjikā* thereon.

The arguments of the SK 17 are as follows (in brackets are given the references to Wezler-Motegi's edition):

(a) [168.4] *saṃghāta-parārthatvāt*;

(b) [169.17] *triguṇâdi-viparyayāt*;

(c) [169.22] *adhiṣṭhānāt*;

(d) [170.4] *puruṣo 'sti bhoktṛ-bhāvāt*

Translation:

(YD 170.5ff.) "Here [it is admitted that both] manifest (*vyakta*) and unmanifest (*avyakta*) are without intelligence (*acetana*), because they are pleasure, pain, delusion in their nature. Therefore, since they are not capable to enjoy themselves, it is necessary to postulate one who enjoys (*bhoktṛ*). That one who enjoys (enjoyer) is a spirit (*puruṣa*).

[Question:] Now, what is this "enjoyment" (*bhoga*)?

[Answer:] "Enjoyment" [is] (...)[46]

[Objection:] No, because of the real existence of cognition in the consciousness. For it is just the consciousness which is capable of cognizing objects

(*viṣayopalabdhisamartha*), hence it suffices to accept [the consciousness] as that much only. What is the use of inventing (*parikalpita*) a spirit (*puruṣa*)?
[Reply:] What is then that "consciousness"?
[Answer:] It is thought, mind, consciousness.[47] It is the sixfold cognition (*jñāna*)[48] - the eye consciousness, the ear consciousness, the nose consciousness, the tongue consciousness, the body consciousness, and the mind consciousness.[49]

Here, in dependence on the visible and the eye arises the eye consciousness. And similarly, the sound and the ear, the smell and the nose, the taste and the tongue, [the tangible and the body][50], the mental factors and the mind, bring forward [the proper type of] thought (consciousness) (*citta*). Its [general] factors are [the following]: feeling, perception, will, contact, attention, etc.[51]
[Conclusion:] Therefore, because just the aggregate of consciousness has the capacity of enjoying (*upabhoga-sāmarthya*) [the proper objects], a self does not exist.[52]
(170.21) [Rejoinder:] No, [it is not true,] because the non-intelligent product (*acetana-vikāra*) cannot be applied to intelligence (*cetanānupapatteḥ*). But now, what concerns [your] assumption that "the eye consciousness arises in dependence on the eye and the visible object, etc.", it follows that because of non-intelligency of a product (*acetana-vikāratvāt*) it is without intelligence (*acetana*), like a jar and the like [things]. Henceforth, it is only a wishful thinking that the intelligence (*cetanā*) is a quality of mind (*manodharma*)."
(e) [173.20] *kaivalyârtham pravṛtteś ca*

Here, the author of the *Yuktidīpikā* rejects the objection that *puruṣa* does not exist because it is not cognized by any of the means of valid cognition, and once more refers to the Buddhist scriptural passages quoted by him earlier [YD 167.18f.]:
Translation:
(174.6) "What has been said there: «Because it is not apprehended by any means of valid cognition, *puruṣa* does not exist», this is not reasonable (not appropriate) (*ayuktam*). And also [in relation to] what was said: *śūnyam ādhyātmikaṃ paśya...*, this [statement] we shall refute later (*paścāt pratiṣedhaṃ vakṣyāmaḥ*).[53]
(174.9) Now, what concerns [the statement, YD 167.21ff.:] *asti karmâsti vipākaḥ kārakas tu nopalabhyate...* - [the Yuktidīpikā-kāra says:] it is true, because we [also] claim that *puruṣa* is not an agent, neither when the aggregates [of a person] (*skandha*) are cast down, nor [when they are] put on again, nor with regard to anything else (*anyatra*). Therefore those who are striving for bliss (*śreyo'rthin*) should obtain the highest immortal permanent state which is an antidote to all calamities [of existence], like rebirth, death, etc., due to recognition of the true nature of Spirit (*puruṣa-sattva*) only, after having excluded (removed) (*apohya*) the improper (*asamañjasa*) error (*bhrānti*) of assuming falsely the doctrine of non-

existence of a self (*nairātmyavāda*), which is contrary to all scriptures and reason (*āgama-tarka*)[54]."

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Vasubandhu's Paramārthasaptatikā (YD ad SK 20)

§7. It is known from Paramārtha's *Life of Vasubandhu* and other sources that, admittedly, Vasubandhu composed a short versified treatise *Paramārthasaptatikā* in order to refute the Sāṃkhya doctrine.[55]

Perhaps the earliest document we possess is a list of Vasubandhu's works appended to Paramārtha's *Life of Vasubandhu*, which was compiled probably in 563-569 A.D.[56] The works are listed under three headings. In the first division are listed: *Paramārthasaptati(kā)*[57], *Abhidharmakośa-kārikā* together with *bhāṣya* (transl. by Paramārtha, Nanjio 1269 = Taisho 1559), and, without a title, a refutation of Vasurāta's *Vyākaraṇa*-treatise.

Xuanzang's list of Vasubandhu's works, which is found in his Buddhist Records of the Western Countries is much smaller than that of Paramārtha[58]. Only four titles are mentioned, viz. *Abhidharmakośa*, *Paramārthaśāstra*, *Vijñaptimātrasiddhi*, and *Madhyāntavibhāga*.

The *Paramārthasaptatikā*, together with the *Abhidharmakośa*, is mentioned by Kamalaśīla in his *Pañjikā* on TS as the work by Vasubandhu. Probably a stanza from the *Paramārthasaptatikā* is quoted in Kamalaśīla's *Pañjikā* and in Yaśomitra's *Vyākhyā*.

It was even suggested by Jaini (ADV, p. 225 n. 2) that the author of the *Abhidharmadīpa* wrote a treatise *Tattvasaptati* which was modelled on Vasubandhu's *Paramārthasaptati*.[59]

A few stanzas which have been preserved, scattered in the texts, the scholars tried to ascribe to Vasubandhu. The material at our disposal is, however, very scarce and thus it is insufficient to draw a positive conclusion.

§ 8. A verse of unknown authorship is quoted in the YD ad SK 20. It is also known from Yaśomitra's AKVy ad AKBh IX (Wogihara, 699.25; Shastri, 1192.26-27).[60] It was suggested that the stanza may come from Vasubandhu's lost work, the *Paramārthasaptati(kā)*.[61] According to Stcherbatsky and de La Vallée Poussin, the stanza was composed by Dharmakīrti. However, judging from its Tibetan version which has been preserved in the Tibetan translation of Yaśomitra's AKVy (P Chu, fol. 381b5 = Mejor 1991:12 n. 35), it is not found among Dharmakīrti's works (see the *Verse-Index of Dharmakīrti's Works (Tibetan Versions)*, ed. E. Steinkellner). For the testimony of the later non-Buddhist texts, see the references in LVP, *Kośa*,

IX, p. 233 n. 1.

(YD 181.33ff.:) āha ca -

muṣṭir yathā vikīrṇaḥ sūcyagre sarṣapādīnām /
tiṣṭhati na sūkṣmabhāvāt tadvad dvandvāni sarvajñe //

iti / cetanāśaktiyogāt tu draṣṭṛtvam asya svābhāvikam /
evaṃ ced yad uktam -

varṣātapābhyāṃ kiṃ vyomnaś carmaṇy asti tayoḥ phalam /
carmopamaś cet so 'nityaḥ khatulyaś ced asatsamaḥ //*

iti tad ayuktam / kiṃ kāraṇam / yasmād <yathā> avikāryarūpasyākāśasya sannidhānamātrān meghātapa-[62]rajo-dhūma-prabhṛtibhir abhinnadeśatvād atyantaśuddhasyāpi malinam iva rūpam upalakṣy<eta> na ca vikāryatvam evam ātmano 'pi syāt / tad yuktam etat puruṣasamyogāt karaṇasya pratyayopacāraḥ, puruṣasya ca guṇasaṃyogāt kartṛtvopacāra iti /

*) YD: *asatsamaḥ* = Ślokavārttika; AKVy: *asatphalaḥ.*

Translation:
"Says [the Buddhist ?], -

«Like a scattered handful of the mustard-seeds, etc. cannot stay on the top of a needle, because of its smallness,
so the pairs of opposites at the omniscient.»[63]

But his [= *puruṣa's*] character of a spectator is natural (i.e. belonging to his own nature) due to the association with the force (potency) of intelligence.
Were so, [what] has been said, [viz.] --

«What is [the efficacy] of rain and sunshine with regard to the air? Their effect is [seen only] on the skin.
If it [= ātman] were similar to the skin, it would be temporal; if it were similar to the air, it would be inefficient (* *asatsamaḥ* = equal to non-being).» --

is incorrect. - Why? - Because, similarly as the ether/space (*ākāśa*), which has a form not liable to change, from the mere presence (vicinity), [and] due to occurrence in the same place together with the clouds, sunshine, mist, smoke, etc., even though it is very pure, would be seen in (distinguished by) a form as it were impure, and the property of changeability of a self (*ātman*) too, could not be [distinguished] in like manner.

Therefore it is correct [to say] that from the association with *puruṣa*, the instrument (*karaṇa*) is metaphorically assigned (figuratively applied) to intelligence (*pratyayopacāra*)[64], and from the association with the qualities (*guṇa*), agency (*kartṛtvopacāra*) of *puruṣa* is metaphorically ascribed [to it]."[65]

§ 9. Kamalaśīla, in his *Pañjikā*, after having quoted a verse (TSP 164.15-16), makes an explicit reference to both the *Abhidharmakośa* and the *Paramārthasaptatikā* as the works of Vasubandhu (TSP, ed. Shastri 164.17f. [*-*draṣtravabhedaṃ*, **cāvekṣya]):

dṛṣṭi-daṃṣṭrâvabhedaṃ ca bhraṃśaṃ cāpekṣya** karmaṇām /*
deśayanti jinā dharmaṃ vyāghrīpotāpahāravat // iti / evam ācārya-
Vasubandhu-prabhṛtibhiḥ kośa-paramārthsaptatikādiṣv
abhiprāyaprakāśanāt parākrāntam...

The author of the two (or more ?) stanzas, the first of which was reproduced by Kamalaśīla, and which are known already from the AKBh IX (Pradhan 470.7-8; Shastri 1210.1-5), was identified by Yaśomitra as a Sautrāntika master, bhadanta Kumāralāta (AKVy Wogihara 708.16-709.10; Shastri, 1210.30).[66]

The stanza(s), however, has (have) been not found among the existing Sanskrit fragments published by H. Lüders, nor in the first chapter of the Tibetan version, as edited by M. Hahn.

§ 10. Schayer 1932:93(1988:458) and Liebenthal 1933:22 n. 1; 96 n. 65, following Bhattacharyya, the author of the lengthy Introduction to Krishnamacharya's *editio princeps* of the TSP, called attention to the fact that Kamalaśīla in his *Pañjikā* quotes another stanza which may also come from the lost *Paramārthasaptatikā*, ascribed to Vasubandhu:

āha ca -

yad eva dadhi tat kṣīraṃ yat kṣīraṃ tad dadhīti ca /
*vadatā Rudrilenaiva *khyāpinā Vindhyavāsinā* // iti /*

--) TSP, ed. Shastri 29.11(12): *khyāpitā Vindhyavāsitā*.

"Was Quark ist, eben das ist Milch, und was Milch ist, ist Quark - so ist von dem Sprecher Rudrila Vindhyavāsin verkündet worden." (Liebenthal, p. 96.)

The same stanza is quoted also by Abhayadevasūri, a Jaina commentator on the *Saṃmatitarkaprakaraṇa* (STP, p. 296.21-22), with the reading: *vadatā Vindhyavāsitvaṃ khyāpitaṃ Vindhyavāsinā //* in the second line. The quotation is anonymous (*uktaṃ ca*). Most probably it was simply taken out from the TSP since there are many quotations from that text in Abhayadevasūri's commentary.

Wezler 1992:292 n. 13 remarks: "The distinction between the two modes of being has most probably been overlooked, or deliberately ignored, by the unknown author of the famous satirical verse quoted by Kamalaśīla (Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā 29.10-11) *yad eva dadhi tat kṣīraṃ yat kṣīraṃ tad dadhīti ca / vadatā rūdrilenaiva khyāpitā vindhyavāsitā.*"

Wezler also refers to the *Abhidharmadīpa* passage which refers to the Sāṃkhya position (ADV 273.29f. [- my translation, M.M.]): "The Sāṃkhya observes: «Only existing thing arises, as for instance curd which is [already] existent in milk, due to the identity of cause and effect»."[67] (See also Appendix.)

The Yuktidīpikā-kāra refers to Vindhyavāsin (and/or his followers) several times.[68]

A sharp polemics against Vindhyavāsin is found in the *Abhidharmadīpa* ad I.47cd. Jaini observed (ADV, p. 38 n. 1) that the refutation of Vindhyavāsin's opinion is not found in the AKBh. We should add that his name does not appear in Vasubandhu's work either.[69]

The question is whether the sense organs get in touch with their objects, or not. The Abhidharmadīpa-kāra says (AD 46cd) that three sense organs, viz. the mind, the eye, and the ear, do not enter into contact with their respective objects, and the other three, viz. the nose, the taste, and the body, do enter into contact with their objects. Translation:

"Now again, in this matter, Vindhyavāsin regards the sense organs as all-pervading/omnipresent (*sarvagata*). Against that [the author of the treatise] says this:

(47cd) «If [it is said that] there is no fault, because of all-pervasion, [we answer -] no, because of lack of connection, like [in the case of] sesamum oil».

For who would say, not being insane, that the oil is all-pervading in the sesamum seeds? And similarly (*tadvat* [Jaini: *tadvak*]), who would think/imagine, not being foolish, that the sense organs are apart (*bahir*) from the bases of the eye, the ear, and the rest? (Or perhaps: the external sense organs (*bahirindriyāṇi*) are from the bases...?)".

III. Appendix

1. Vasubandhu, AKBh IX, Pudgalaviniścaya

The Yuktidīpikā (vide supra) contains a passage from a Buddhist Āgama which is also found in the 9th chapter of AKBh. Below are given both fragments.

(a) YD, Pandeya 77.8-14; Wezler-Motegi 167.11-19:

na hi bauddhānāṃ śrutismṛtipurāṇetihāsāḥ pramāṇam / yaś caiṣām āgamaḥ sa evam āha --

ātmaiva hy ātmano nāsti viparītena kalpyate /
naiveha sattvam ātmāsti dharmās tv ete sahetukāḥ //
dvādaśaiva tavāṅgāni skandhāyatanadhātavaḥ /
vicintya sarvāṇy etāni pudgalo nopalabhyate //

śūnyam adhyātmikaṃ viddhi śūnyaṃ paśya bahirgatam /
na dṛśyate so 'pi kaścid yo bhāvayati śūnyatām //

(b) AKBH IX, ed. Pradhan, p. 466.5-13; ed. Shastri, p. 1202.22-1203.6 (with Yaśomitra's AKVy); P Tanjur, Ngu, fol. 98b5-8. Ejima, Textcrit. Remarks, p. 16. Cf. LVP, Kośa, IX, p. 249 & nn. 3-5, p. 250 & nn. 1-3 (and Additions); Pasadika, no. 509 (with further details); Honjō p. 118 no. 15.
[Underlined is the text in common with the YD.]
Kṣudrake'pi cāgame #daridra-brāhmaṇam adhikṛtyoktaṃ --

*śṛṇu tvaṃ *svādare dharmaṃ sarvagranthipramocanam /*
yathā saṃkliśyate cittaṃ yathā cittaṃ viśudhyati //
ātmaiva hy ātmano nāsti viparītena kalpyate /
nāstīha sattva ātmā vā(1) dharmās tv ete sahetukāḥ //
dvādaśaiva bhavāṅgāni skandhāyatanadhātavaḥ /
vicintya sarvāṇy etāni pudgalo nopalabhyate //
śūnyam adhyātmakaṃ paśya śūnyaṃ paśya bahirgatam /
na labhyate(2) so 'pi kaścid yo bhāvayati śūnyatām // iti.[70]

#) Ms.: *daridra-brāhmaṇam.* Read: *bādari-brāhmaṇam* (Ejima, p. 16). Honjō, loc. cit., reads: *bādarim.* Tib. *bram ze rgya shug gi bu.* Cf. Mvy 5809: *rgya shug gi 'bru = badara-phalam.*
*) Ms.: *tvaṃm bādare.* Read: *bādare* (Ejima, p. 16; cf. Pasadika, loc. cit.).
--) Quoted in TSP ad 3319-20 (ed. Shastri, 1048.9); MMK p. 355.4; Viṃśatikā-vṛtti ad 8 (ed. Lévi p. 5.22).
(1) Yaśomitra: ca (cf. Pasadika, loc. cit.).
(2) Yaśomitra: *vidyate* (cf. Pasadika, loc. cit.).

Translation:[71]

"As it was said in the Kṣudraka Āgama with reference to brahmin Bādari:

Listen, Bādari, about the Dharma which liberates from all ties - how the thought becomes defiled, and how the thought becomes purified.
For a self does not exist as a [real] self - it is [only] falsely imagined [to exist as such].
[Such entity like] a sentient being and/or a self does not exist here, [in this world]; there are but the factors which are conditioned by causes.[72]
There are only twelve parts of the state of existence, [which are classified as] [five] aggregates, [twelve] bases of cognition, [and eighteen] elements.
Having considered all these [factors], [one must come to a conclusion that] a person (an individual) is not perceived [among them].
Behold as void the internal, behold as void the external.[73]

Even that one who meditates upon voidness, whoever he may be, is not perceived.[74]"

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2. Paramārthaśūnyatā-dharmaparyāya

Tibetan text according to Śamathadeva, P Tanjur, Tu, fol. 155b3-156a8, ed. in Mejor 1991:65-66; Sanskrit text reconstructed and translated in Lamotte 1973:313-316 (with copious comparative notes); cf. Pasadika no. 179; Honjō p. 120 no. 27. (Translated are only the relevant paragraphs.)

"§ 4. [And, monks,] which is the «Discourse on the voidness in the highest sense»?

The eye which is arising, comes from nowhere, and [the eye] which is vanishing, nowhere accumulates [again].

§ 5. Therefore, monks, the eye, having not existed [before], [now] exists, and having existed [it] perishes (*pratigacchati*, goes back).

§ 6. There is action, there is result, but the doer is not perceived which casts down these aggregates and puts on again another aggregates, except the dharma convention (*dharma-saṃketa*).

§ 7. The same should be said about the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind. [Tib. omits this §.]

§ 8. Here, that dharma convention means: when this exists, that exists too; when this arises, that arises too, i.e. conditioned by ignorance are formations, conditioned by formations is consciousness, [... etc.], conditioned by birth is old age and death, [... etc.]. In this way, there comes about nothing but (*kevala*) this great mass of suffering.

§ 9. Similarly, when this does not exists, that does not exist too; when this does not arise, that does not arise too, i.e. through cessation of ignorance cease formations, through cessation of formations ceases consciousness, [... etc.] In this way, this great mass of suffering alone comes to cessation."

2.1. Abhidharmadīpa

A passage from the *Paramārthaśūnyatā-sūtra* [henceforth abbr. PAŚS] has been used by the author of the *Abhidharmadīpa* commentary in the refutation of the Sāṃkhya.[75] The discussion concerns the problem of existence, or non-existence, of the future and the past time.

Translation:

(ADV 266.5) "If from the PAŚS the non-existence [is to be concluded, we answer:]

- No, because of not understanding its meaning. For that reason and because of the demonstration of existence of the future and the rest. Here it would be [like this:] - The Blessed One would clearly indicate in the PAŚS the non-existence of the future and the rest. Yet it was said there: - «The eye which is arising, comes from nowhere, and [the eye] which is vanishing, nowhere accumulates [again].»[76] If the future and the past really existed, it would result in admitting (assenting to) the fault of not going and going.

That [argument] is also not [acceptable]. - Why? - Because of not understanding the meaning of the Sūtra. For that reason and because of demonstration of the existence of the future and the rest.

This indeed is the meaning of the Sūtra. - [The words] which [the Buddha] expressed, viz. «The eye...», are for the sake of denial of the rules of dispute which are contained in the Veda (*vedoktavādavidhi*), and in order to reject the opinion of the Sāṃkhya(s). (...)

(268.1) The Sāṃkhyas declare: - «The eye arises from the nature (*pradhāna*) and also ceases in it.» In order to refute this, the Blessed One said: «The eye which is arising...»

The factors (*dharma*) under the appellation of 'future', 'past', 'atom', 'non-information', are indeed not situated in any kind of a spot/locus (*adeśapradeśastha*), and therefore [such notions as] their coming or going cannot be applied. (...)

(268.10) Or, for the sake of rejecting the opinion of the Sāṃkhya. The Sāṃkhyas [accept] one permanent cause which abandoned its own birth (production) (*svāṃ jātim ajahat*), and after having assumed such and such a different form, it transforms (*pariṇamati*) itself into such and such a different aspect. And for the sake of denial of that [opinion] the Blessed One said: «The eye...»

The eye, not having existed, and in the present [time] for one moment only having taken the form of an action, and [then] having abandoned [it], disappears (vanishes) [again].[77]"

3. Vasubandhu's Pratītyasamutpāda-vyākhyā[78]

"§1. Which Sūtra[79] [will be investigated]?

[Answer:] The one which states «I shall preach to you, monks, the beginning (*ādi*) of the dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and the explanation (*vibhaṅga*)».

§2. Why explain this?

[Answer:] In order to show that «In this way, there comes about nothing but (*kevala*) this great mass of suffering».

§3. And [in answer to the question:] «What is that teaching for?» someone might say that it has the purpose to remove ignorance (*avidyā*), doubt (*vicikitsā*),

and false knowledge (*mithyā-jñāna*) [of those people who say:] «If there is no soul then in what manner does one transmigrate?»[80]

§4. But as for me [i.e. Vasubandhu][81], I regard it as an antidote (*pratipakṣa*) to the opinion [upholding the existence] of a self (*ātmadṛṣṭi*)[82] and to desire (*tṛṣṇā*). Thus in presenting selflessness and the emergence of suffering [the teaching] is in conformity with voidness (*śūnyatā*)[83] and the absence of intention (*apraṇihita*)[84].

Notes

1. Cf. *Mānuṣyakasūtra* quoted in AKBh IX (Pradhan, 465.13-14; Shastri, 1202.2-3): *atreyaṃ saṃjñā, sattvo naro manuṣyo mānavaś ca poṣaḥ puruṣaḥ pudgalo jīvo jantur iti.* Cf. LVP, Kośa IX, p. 245.
2. AKBh IX (Pradhan, 461.13; Shastri, 1191.3): *vātsīputrīyāḥ pudgalaṃ santam icchanti.* Yaśomitra identifies the Vatsīputrīyas with the Sāṃmatīyas, AKVy (Wogihara, 699.3; Shastri, 1191.24): *vātsīputrīyāḥ āryasaṃmatīyāḥ.* Cf. also Bcar-ṭīkā ad IX.60 (ed. LVP, 297.8-10): *pudgalavādinas tu punar antaścaratīrthikāḥ skandhebhyas tattvānyatvābhyām avācyaṃ pudgalanāmānam ātmānam icchanti/.*
3. LVP, Kośa, IX, pp. 227-229: *Notes préliminaires*; see Cousins for a detailed study of the school of personalists, with bibliography.
4. See Schayer 433f.(68f.) for the references. The *ātma-parīkṣā* chapter of TS(P) is especially rich in the critical expositions of the views of different schools on the problem of a self. It contains the following sub-chapters: 1. *naiyāyika-vaiśeṣika-parikalpitâtmaparīkṣā*, 2. *mīmāṃsaka--*, 3. *kāpila--*, 4. *digambara--*, 5. *aupaniṣatka--*, 6. *vātsīputrīya--* [transl. by Schayer, ibid.].
5. The so-called ātman controversy in the Buddhist and Brahmanic sources has been studied by C. Oetke (Oetke 1988).
6. Not analyzed in Oetke 1988.
7. Cf. *Abhidharmadīpa*, p. 266ff. where the passage from that Scripture is used in an argument against the Sāṃkhya (see below).
8. See below n. 17.
9. Cf. Nāgārjuna, MMK XVIII.1: "If the self were to be identical with the aggregates, it will partake of uprising and ceasing. If it were to be different from the aggregates, it would have the characteristics of the non-aggregates." (Kalupahana, p. 263). See also the quotation from the **Nāgasenabhikṣusūtra* in Vasubandhu's AKBh IX (Sanskrit text: Pradhan 469.13-24; Shastri 1209.10-1210.13. Cf. LVP, Kośa, IX, p. 263 & n. 3; Pasadika, No. 522).
10. A detailed analysis is found in Oetke, pp. 195-242: "Der Reduktionismus

des *Abhidharmakośa*": -- A) Der Argumentationsgang des neunten Buches des *Abhidharmakośa* (195-209); -- B) Vasubandhu's Theorie des Erfahrungssubjektes (209-240); -- Nachbemerkung (241-242).

11. It has been rightly observed by Stcherbatsky (Stcherbatsky 1988 p. 95 n. 49) that the Vātsiputrīya, the main adversary of Vasubandhu, "may start questions not only in accordance with his own views (svamatena), but also from the standpoint of another system (paramatam āśritya)."
12. Cf. e.g. AKBh, ed. Pradhan, 471.24 (cf. Oetke, p. 203): *yadi tarhi pudgalo nāsti ka eṣa saṃsarati* /; 472.3f.: *yadi skandhamātram idam...*; 472.16f. (cf. also Nyāyavārttika ad 1.1.10; Oetke, p. 344ff.): *yadi tarhi sarvathāpi nāsty ātmā kathaṃ kṣaṇikeṣu citteṣu cirānubhūtasyārthasya smaraṇaṃ bhavati pratyabhijñānaṃ vā* /; 476.4: *ātmany asati kimarthaḥ karmārambhaḥ* /; 476.13f.: *yady ātmā nāsti kasyāyam ahaṃkāraḥ* /; 476.16 (cf. Nyāyavārttika, ibid.): *asaty ātmani ka eṣa sukhito duḥkhito vā* /; 476.19 (cf. Oetke, p. 209): *asaty ātmani ka eṣāṃ karmaṇāṃ kartā kaś ca phalānāṃ bhoktā bhavati* /.
13. Lit. "those who are external [to the Buddhist doctrine], outsiders", see BHSD p. 400: bāhyaka, and p. 399: bāhiraka.
14. Cf. AKBh (Pradhan, 140.14-15; Shastri, 461.12): *ātmavādaḥ punar ātmabhāvaḥ / ātmeti vādo 'sminn ity ātmavādaḥ* /. Cf. Yaśomitra, AKVy (Wogihara, 300.12-14; Shastri, loc. cit.). Cf. Triṃśikā-bhāṣya (Lévi, 23.12): *upādānaskandheṣv ātmeti darśanam ātmadṛṣṭiḥ satkāyadṛṣṭir ity arthaḥ* /.
15. The kārikā is quoted in Bcar ad IX.73 (ed. LVP, 306.21-22).
16. Tib. *nang gi byed pa'i skyes bu*. LVP, Kośa, III, p. 57: "un agent intérieur, un Puruṣa".
17. *anyatra dharmasaṃketāt*, cf. LVP, Kośa, III, p. 57: "indépendamment de la relation causale des *dharmas*"; id., IX, p. 260 & n. 2: "en dehors de la production causale des *dharmas* [qui donne l'impression d'un agent permanent]"; Lamotte 1973, p. 314 & n. 8 (with full references): "sauf s'il s'agit là d'une métaphore sur la Loi". Tib. *chos su brdar b(r)tags pa ma gtogs pa*.
18. See Lamotte 1973:313-316; Mejor 1991:65-66. LVP, Kośa, IX, p. 259 n. 5; 260 nn. 1, 2, 3. Quoted in Bcar, ed. LVP, 307.7-10. Cf. also *Lalitavistara*: "There is no self, no person, no one who transmigrates (*na ca ātma puṅgala na saṃkramako 'sti kaścit*)" (see the reference in BHSD sub *saṃkramaka*).
19. Cf. Speiyer, *Sanskrit Syntax*, § 228; §229.4 : "Compounds in *-mātram* are bahuvrīhis, used as substantives of the neuter, and properly have the meaning «the exact measure of which is -». Yet, as a rule they are used as

if their latter member were some limitative particle and *-mātram* may be translated by «but, only»." To these Hartmann, p. 55, adds: "als solches" (I am obliged to A. Wezler for this information). According to Sthiramati, the word "only" has the meaning of accurate determination (*avadhāraṇa*), P Tho, fol. 35b3f.: *ñid kyi sgra ni nges par gzung ba'i don du ste /.*

20. AKBh Pradhan, p. 129 n. 4: "MS. seems to correct *ucyate* into *upacaryate*". Cf. AKBh, Tib. P Gu, fol. 143a1-2: *gal te phung po tsam kho na la bdag ces 'dogs na de la ni dgag pa med do /.* Tib. *'dogs pa* = (Jäschke) "to bind, fasten, fix attach; (sub)join, affix."
21. The question whether the skandhas are identical or different from the ātman is discussed in MMK XVIII.1, with Prasannapadā ad loc., p. 341ff.; Madhyamakāvatāra VI.127-128 quoted in: Prasannapadā p. 342.5-12.
22. Yaśomitra explains that the five aggregates move by way of continuous series because of momentariness, like a lamp (AKVy, Wogihara 283.10-12).
23. Yaśomitra explains that projecting force means continuance of time, which distinguishes the lifetime, because of difference of the sum of deeds conducive to longevity (*āyuḥsaṃvartanīya*) (AKVy, Wogihara 283.13-15).
24. Cf. BHSD sub *paripūrayati, paripūri(ī).*
25. Cf. Mejor 1991:96f. on the Vaibhāṣikas' explanation of the *pratītyasamutpāda* in AKBh ad III.28ab (Pradhan, 139.25-140.25).
26. Pradhan 461 n. 3: "Y[aśomitra] omits *sarva*". Tib. reads: *ñon mongs rnams ni* (P Ngu, fol. 93b8).
27. Pradhan 461 n. 4: "Ya. vā."
28. Tib. P Ngu, fol. 94a3: *yul snang bar gyur pa dang / rgyu yid la byed pa yod kyang...*
29. According to A. Wezler (Wezler 1974, 446, 450), the *Yuktidīpikā* is "not a commentary on the S[āṃkhya]K[ārikā], but on a Vārttika on the SK just as Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya is primarily not a commentary on the Aṣṭādhyāyī, but a supertext on Kātyāyana's Vārttika on the Sūtra of Pāṇini. (...) '*Rājavārttika*' is the name of the Vārttika on the SK that is preserved only in the YD, forming as it were its skeleton."
30. Wezler 1974:455 n. 47; Wezler 1990:127 n. 1; Wezler 1993:282 n. 3. First edited by P. Chakravarti in 1938 (based on a single Ms), then it was edited by R.C. Pandeya in 1967 (based on two Mss); a new critical edition by Wezler-Motegi (based on five Mss) was published in 1998.
31. Here is a provisional list of such references: YD, ed. Wezler-Motegi: 70.22f. - vaiśeṣika-bauddhāḥ, 104.11 - bauddhaṃ prati, 109.9 - bauddhāḥ, 125.9 - bauddhapakṣe, 129.6 - śākyaputrīyāḥ, 164.3 - bauddhānāṃ, 167.5 - śākyaputrīyāḥ, 167.11 - bauddhānāṃ, 188.20 - kṣaṇikavādy āha, 266.24 - bauddhaiḥ. Larson who devoted a little space to the description of the

Yuktidīpikā (Larson, p. 149f., 280f.) observed (p. 149) that the text, in general, "is quite confusing and problematic", and contains "a number of polemics against various kinds of Buddhism, and may prove valuable as a source for further knowledge concerning various schools or traditions of Buddhism."

32. YD, ed. Wezler-Motegi, Introduction § 6 "Title of the Text, Authorship and Date".
33. Cf. Ui p. 86ff. who refers to *Piṅgala's commentary (Taisho 1564: Zhonglun) on Nāgārjuna's *Mādhyamaka-śāstra* (chapter XVIII: ātma-parīkṣā). See Wezler 1969:199ff.
34. Cf. AKBh IX, Pudgalaviniścaya. The Budhists accept two pramāṇas: perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference (*anumāna*), the Sāṃkhyas add to these two the third, verbal testimony (*āptavacana*) (SK 4). Moreover, they accept threefold inference (SK 5): *pūrvavat*, *śeṣavat*, and *sāmānyatodṛṣṭam*.
35. Cf. Gauḍapāda ad SK 7 (p. 57): *atra kaścid āha - pradhānaṃ puruṣo vā nopalabhyate / yac ca nopalabhyate loke tan nāsti / tasmāt tāv api na staḥ /. Vasubandhu, Viṃśatikā-vṛtti* ad 16, ed. Lévi 8.22f.: *pramāṇavaśād astitvaṃ nāstitvaṃ vā nirdhāryate /.* Cf. also AKBh V.27 (Pradhan 301.1-3): *vārṣagaṇyavādaś caivaṃ dyotito bhavati / yad asty asty eva tat / yan nāsti nāsty eva tat / asato nāsti saṃbhavaḥ / sato nāsti vināśa iti /.*
36. Cf. discussion on Bcar IX.61ff.
37. Cf. the definitions of anumāna in the YD p. 38.6ff.
38. YD ad SK 5b: *trividham anumānam ākhyātam*, ed. Wezler-Motegi, p. 82ff. Cf. Ui, p. 86ff.; Wezler 1969; Nenninger.
39. See the Appendix for the details.
40. YD 77.15-16: *punar apy āha -- asti karmāsti vipākaḥ kārakas tu nopalabhyate ya imān svān dharmān ākṣipati / anyāṃś ca pratisandadhati, anyatra dharmasaṃketāt / tasmāt sarva-pramāṇānupalabdher nāsty ātmeti /.* See the Appendix.
41. The Sāṃkhyas prove just the opposite arguing that the soul (spirit) exists because there is no counter-proof of its non-existence (cf. SPrBh ad VI.1: *asty ātmā nāstitva-sādhanâbhāvāt /*).
42. SK 6 says that the knowledge of objects which are beyond the reach of the senses (*atīndriya*) is achieved through the inference from analogy. Cf. Māṭharavṛtti (10.21f.): *atra pradhānapuruṣāv atīndriyau tayoḥ sāmānyato dṛṣṭād anumānāt siddhiḥ.*
43. Cf. Garbe, p. 356ff. (IV.i.2: Beweise für die Existenz der Seele).
44. Ed. Wezler-Motegi, p. 279: *asṃghātaparârthatvāt triguṇâdiviparyayād adhiṣṭhānāt / puruṣo 'sti bhoktṛbhāvāt kaivalyârthaṃ pravṛtteś ca //*

45. Cf. Prasannapadā, LVP 344.2-8 & n. 3: *nanu ca tīrthikāḥ skandhebhyo vyatiriktam ātmānaṃ pratipannā bhinnalakṣaṇam ācakṣate, tasmāt teṣām abādhaka evāyaṃ vidhir iti / yathā ca tīrthikā ātmano bhinnalakṣaṇam ācakṣate tathoktaṃ Madhyamakāvatāre* [= VI.121, Tibetan text, ed. LVP 235.4-8] */ ātmā tīrthyaiḥ kalpyate nityarūpo 'kartā bhoktā nirguṇo niṣkriyaś ca / kaṃcit kaṃcid bhedam āśritya tasya bhedaṃ yātā prakriyā tīrthikānām // ity anena //*
"Mais dira-t-on. -- Les hérétiques croient à l'existence d'un moi distinct des agrégats et parlent de son caractère spécial. Par conséquent votre démonstration ne vaut pas contre eux. -- Sur la façon dont les hérétiques parlent du caractère spécial du moi, le Madhyamakāvatāra s'exprime de la manière suivante:
Le moi est conçu par les infidèles comme éternel,
inactif, jouisseur, sans qualités et sans activité.
Et selon qu'ils s'attachent à telle ou telle particularité du moi,
les systèmes des hérétiques se diversifient." (de Jong, p. 5 & n. 16).
46. Here there is a lacuna in the text. Pandeya reads (79.5): *ucyate - bhoga upalabdhisadbhāvāt* /; Wezler-Motegi read (170.9): *ucyate: bhoga* <...> (170.10) <*āha: na vijñāne*> *upalabdhisadbhāvāt* /. The underlined passage is a vārttika, according to Wezler-Motegi. My translation is tentative. Perhaps, in the context of the discussion in YD, one should refer to SPrBh (ed. Garbe, p. 51, 63) ad I.104: *cid-avasāno bhogaḥ*; I.105: *akartur api phalopabhogo 'nnādyavat*; I.143: *bhoktṛ-bhāvāt.*
47. Cf. AK II.34a (Pradhan, 61.22; Shastri, 208.2): *cittaṃ mano 'tha vijñānam ekārtham.*
48. Cf. Bcar IX.60d and commentary thereon (LVP, 294.6, 19-10) where the identification of the six kinds of consciousness with a notion of "I" is strongly rejected (... *ahaṃ nāpi ṣaḍvijñānāni sarvathā* // ... *ṣaṭ cakṣuḥ-śrotra-ghrāṇa-jihvā-kāya-manovijñānāni tāny api nāhaṃ bhavanti* /). See below n. 73.
49. Cf. AKBh ad III.28 (Pradhan, 140.4; Shastri, 460.8: *vijñānaṃ katamat / ṣaḍvijñānakāyā iti* /; AKBh ad I.16a (Pradhan, 11.6-8; Shastri, 50.4-6) *vijñānaṃ prativijñaptiḥ / viṣayaṃ viṣayaṃ prati vijñaptir upalabdhir vijñānaskandha ity ucyate / sa punaḥ ṣaḍ vijñānakāyāḥ cakṣurvijñānaṃ yāvan manovijñānam iti* /. Cf. Pasadika no. 207.
50. Omitted in the YD.
51. **tatra rupaṃ pratītya cakṣuś cotpadyate cakṣurvijñānam / evaṃ śrotra-śabda-ghrāṇa-gandha-jihvā-rasa-manodharmāś cittam utpādayanti / **tasya dharmā vedanā saṃjñā cetanā sparśo* <*manaskāra*>*** *evamādayaḥ* /

*) AKBh IX: *Mānuṣyaka-sūtra*, Pradhan, 465.11-13; Shastri, 1201.12-1202.8:
cakṣuḥ pratītya rūpāṇi cotpadyate cakṣurvijñānaṃ trayāṇāṃ (1202.1) sannipātaḥ sparśaḥ sparṣasahajātā vedanā saṃjñā cetanā itīme catvāro rūpiṇaḥ skandhāś cakṣurindriyaṃ ca rūpam, etavān manuṣyatvam ucyate /
...
**) This is a list of the ten mental factors (*caitasikā dharmāḥ*) coexisting with the every moment of the thought (*cittakṣaṇa*), the so-called mahābhūmikas, AK II.24 (Pradhan, 54.17-18; Shastri, 186.13-14):
vedanā cetanā saṃjñā cchandaḥ sparśo matiḥ smṛtiḥ /
manaskāro 'dhimokṣaś ca samādhiḥ sarvacetasi //
LVP, Kośa, II, p. 153 n. 1 A.: "The order of the Abhidharma (Prakaraṇapāda, Dhātukāya) is as follows: vedanā, saṃjñā, cetanā, sparśa, manaskāra, chanda, adhimukti, smṛti, samādhi, prajñā. - Vasubandhu (Pañcaskandhaka [= ed. Dantinne, p. 7f. & n. 86 - M.M.]) distinguishes five universal (sarvaga) [factors]: sparśa, manaskāra, vedanā, saṃjñā, cetanā, and five particular (pratiniyataviṣaya) [factors]: chanda, adhimukti, smṛti, samādhi, prajñā."
***) *manaḥ saṃskāra* - thus read all the Mss of YD, according to Wezler-Motegi, p. 170 n. 7 ad 170.18. Yet one should read instead of the YD-kāra's ****manaḥ saṃskāra*, the Abhidharmic *manaskāra* (thus Wezler-Motegi). Cf. *Arthaviniścayasūtra* (Samtani, 8.4) has: *tasmāc cetanā manaḥ saṃskāra ity ucyate /*. Cf. also AKBh ad II.24 (Pradhan 54.20; Shastri 187.2f.): *cetanā cittābhisaṃskāro manaskarma /*.

52. Pañjikā on Bcar IX.61 (LVP, 297.15f.): *saṃprati citsvabhāvātvādinaḥ sāṃkhyādayaḥ ṣaḍvijñānānām ātmaniṣedham asahiṣṇavaḥ prāhuḥ / śabdādijñānaṃ cidātmakam ātmaivāsmābhir abhidhīyate /*. "Now, the expounders of the doctrine of a self which, in its own nature, is a spirit - the Sāṃkhya followers and others - unable to endure the denial of a self of the six kinds of consciousness, say -- «We designate the 'self' the sound consciousness and the rest which are, in their own nature, a spirit»."
53. Wezler-Motegi refer to the YD commentary on SK 19.
54. For the references where "'reason' and 'scripture' appear side by side, often in dvandva compounds," see Halbfass 1991:145 and n. 76.
55. Cf. Frauwallner 1959:133(809) & n. 89, 90: "Bekannt ist dessen Paramārthasaptatikā, in welcher er den Sāṃkhya-Lehrer Vindhyavasī bekämpfte. Antworten von seiten des Sāṃkhya klingen in der Yuktidīpikā nach." Cf. Larson pp. 141-149 on Vasubandhu and the Sāṃkhya.
56. Takakusu 1904a; Takakusu 1904b; Takakusu 1904:40-50.
57. Qishizhenshilun (also Shengyiqishilun, *Diyiyidilun), Takakusu 1904a:286

n. 77. *) di, read after Takakusu 1904b:464 n. 14.
58. Beal I:172, 193, 226, 236; Watters I:210, 357, 359, 370.
59. ADV 225.1: *uktam atra karmacintāyām uttaraṃ tattvasaptatau ca /.*
60. See LVP, Kośa, IX, p. 233 n. 1; Stcherbatsky (1920), p. 952 n. 2 [= p. 83 n. 9]; Mejor 1991:12 n. 35.
61. Frauwallner 1951:150f.(639f.): "In diesem Zusammenhang gehört der oft angeführte Vers, der meiner Vermutung nach aus Vasubandhu's Paramārthasaptatikā stammt: Was gehen Regen und Sonneschein den Raum an. Auf der Haut kommen sie zur Geltung. Ist nun (die Seele) der Haut gleich, dann ist sie vergänglich. Ist sie dem Raum gleich, dann unterliegt sie keiner Einwirkung."
62. Pandeya: megha-payo-.
63. Not identified.
64. Cf. LVP, Siddhi, p. 84ff. on *upacāra.*
65. In the following (YD 182.13ff.) the eight types of association of puruṣa and the guṇas are enumerated: *anyatarakarmaja, ubhayakarmaja, saṃyogaja, svābhāvika, śaktinimitta, yogyatālakṣaṇa, yādṛcchika, viṣayaviṣayinimitta.* See also the Māṭharavṛtti ad SK 20: *anekavidho hi saṃyogaḥ,* where the five kinds only are listed: *anyatarakarmaja, sampātaja, svābhāvika, śaktihetuka, yādṛcchika.* Cf. SK, ed. Mainkar, Notes, p. 100f.
66. The other stanza is: *ātmāstitvaṃ hy upagato bhinnah syād dṛṣti-damstrayā / bhramśaṃ kuśalapotasya kuryād aprāpya saṃvṛtim //*
Cf. LVP, *Kośa*, IX, 265 n. 3, 266 n. 1 (& Additions) ; LVP, *Siddhi*, p ; 223 ; Pasadika no. 524.
67. *sāṃkhyaḥ paśyati / vidyamānam eva jāyate / tadyathā kṣīre vidyamānaṃ dadhi, kāryakāraṇayor ekatvāt /.* Cf. in this connection a discussion on the Sāṃkhya concept of *pariṇāma* in the AKBh ad III.50a (cf. Bronkhorst 1997), together with the explanations of the commentators Yaśomitra, Pūrṇavardhana and Sthiramati. This question will be discussed in my forthcoming paper.
68. The following references are to YD, Wezler-Motegi ed. (Pandeya ed. in brackets): 5.8 (3.18); 187.9,12,13,14,15 (91.6,8,9,10,11); 230.6 (121.12); 233.20 (123.30). The subject matter of the passages do not, however, coincide with the reference given in the next footnote. On Vindhyavāsin see Garbe 76ff.; Frauwallner 1958:253f., 269f.
69. ADV (ed. Jaini, 35.8ff.): *atra punar vindhyavāsī paśyati sarvagatatvam indriyāṇām / taṃ pratīdam ucyate /* (10) [47cd] *sarvagatvād adoṣaś cen nāyogāt tilatailavat // ko hy anunmatto brūyāt tileṣu tailaṃ sarvagatam astīti / tadvac* caksuḥśrotrādyadhiṣṭhānebhyo bahir indriyāṇi kaḥ kalpayed amūḍhacetāḥ /* *) Jaini: tadvak-ca-. The question is whether the sense organs get in touch with their objects, or not. The Abhidharmadīpa-

kāra says (AD 46cd) that three sense organs, viz. the mind, the eye, and the ear, do not enter into contact with their respective objects, and the other three, viz. the nose, the taste, and the body, do enter into contact with their objects. Translation:
"Now again, in this matter, Vindhyavāsin regards the sense organs as all-pervading/omnipresent (*sarvagata*). Against that [the author of the treatise] says this: (47cd) « If [it is said that] there is no fault, because of all-pervasion, [we answer -] no, because of lack of connection, like [in case of] sesamum oil ». For who would say, not being insane, that the oil is al-pervading in the sesamum seeds? And similarly (*tadvat* [Jaini: *tadvak*]), who would think/imagine, not being foolish, that the sense organs are apart (*bahir*) from the bases of the eye, the ear, and the rest? (Or perhaps: the external sense organs (*bahirindriyāni*) are from the bases...?)"

70. P Tanjur, Ngu, fol. 98b5-8: lung phran tshegs las kyang / bram ze rgya shug gi bu'i dbang du byas nas /
ji ltar sems ni kun ñon mongs /
ji ltar sems ni rnam byang dang /
mdud pa thams cad 'jig byed pa'i / (6)
chos ni rga shug bu khyod ñon /
bdag ñid kyis na bdag med de /
phyin ci log gis rtog par byed /
'di la bdag gam sems can med /
chos 'di dag ni rgyu dang bcas /
srid pa'i yan lag bcu gñis dang /
phung po skye (7) mched khams rnams te /
rnam par bsams na 'di kun la /
gang zag dmigs pa ma yin no /
nang gi stong pa yin par ltos /
phyi rol gnas pa stong par ltos /
gang zhig stong pa ñid sgom pa /
de yang 'ga' yang (8) mi dmigs so <//> zhes gsungs so //
71. Cf. LVP, *Kośa*, IX, p. 249f.; Stcherbatsky, p. 28f.
72. MMK p. 355.4, with Prasannapadā p. 355.5-6, n. 4.
73. AKBh ad I.39a (Pradhan, 27.5-7; Shastri, 104.5-8): *ṣaḍ vijñānāni ṣaḍāśrayā ity ete dvādaśa dhātava ādhyātmikāḥ / rūpādayas tu ṣaḍ viṣayadhātavo bāhyāḥ / ātmany asati katham ādhyātmikaṃ bāhyaṃ vā / ahaṃkārasanniśrayatvāc cittam ātmety upacaryate /.*
74. Cf. Prasannapadā (ed. LVP, 347.11) on MMK XVIII.2: *ata eva cātmātmīyānupalambhāt paramārthadarśanasamīpastho yogī niyataṃ bhavati /*. "Par conséquent, c'est par la non-perception du moi et du mien que le Yogin s'approche certainement de la vue de l'absolu." (Tr. de Jong,

p. 8.)
75. Cf. also ADV 254.4-6.
76. ADV 267.1-2: *cakṣur utpadyamānaṃ na kutaścid āgacchati nirudhyamānaṃ na kvacit saṃnicayaṃ gacchati, iti vistaraḥ /.* Cf. Lamotte, § 4, p. 314 n. 6.
77. ADV 268.13f.: *cakṣur abhūtvā vartamāne 'dhvani kṣaṇamātraṃ kriyārūpam ādāya tyaktvā punar adarśanaṃ gacchati /.*
78. Rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba dang po dang rnam par dbye ba bshad pa = Tanjur Peking 5496, vol. Chi. fol. 1-71a8; Derge 3995, Chi. 1b1-61a7. Author: Vasubandhu (Dbyig gñen); transl. by Surendrākaraprabha and Nam mkha'. Commentary: Rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba dang po dang rnam par 'byed pa bstan pa'i rgya cher bshad pa = Tanjur Peking 5497, vol. Chi, fol. 71a8-283b6; Derge 3996. Author: Guamati (Yon tan blo gro); the same translators as above. The following fragment comes from my forthcoming book The Buddhist Doctrine of Dependent Origination. Vasubandhu's *Pratītyasamutpādavyākhyā*, Chapter I: On Ignorance.
79. Guṇamati [fol. 80b4-82a6] quotes in extenso the *Pratītyasamutpāda-sūtra*.
80. The answer to this question is offered by AK III.18.
81. Guṇamati fol. 83a2: *slob dpon rang gi bsam pa ston par byed do //.*
82. AKBh ad V.9a, Pradhan p. 283.11: *ātmānam eva tatra* [= Yaśomitra: *pañcopādānaskandheṣu*] *vaśinaṃ paśyann ātmīyaṃ paśyatīty ātmadṛṣṭiḥ;* cf. AKBh ad V.12, p. 287.5: *yatrâtmadṛṣṭis tatrâtmatṛṣṇā* [= Yaśomitra: *pañcopādānaskandheṣu*].
83. See AK VIII.24b-c, Pradhan p. 449.15 [LVP, *Kośa*, VIII, p. 184, 188]: *anātmaśūnyatākārābhyāṃ saṃprayuktaḥ śūnyatāsamādhidvyākāraḥ /.*
84. See AK VIII.24c-d, Pradhan p. 449.16 and ff. [= LVP, *Kośa*, VIII, p. 185, 189]: *apraṇihitaḥ satyākārair ataḥ paraiḥ //.*

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MAGNANIMITY OF MADHYAMAKA

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1. The veracity of the common opinion that Buddhists deny the existence of a soul obviously depends on how the term, or rather: the various terms for a soul be employed by ourselves and by the Buddhist authors to whose extant writings we now refer.

In a sense it is true, as numerous canonical sources have it, that -- to refer to the celebrated *Śālistambasūtra* -- a human individual consists of six elements there being no *ātman*, no *sattva*, no *jīva*, no *jantu*, no *manuja*, no *mānava*, no female, no male, no neuter, no I and no mine (see the quotation given in *Prasannapadā*, p.562). Each of these terms for a "soul" has its own particular historical background and connotation, yet to be researched.

But in another sense it is also true, as another *sūtra* has it, that *ātmā* is one *anta* whereas *nairātmya* is another, and that the true view of the matter is the middle, the *madhyam* to be discovered between those two extremes (*Kāśyapaparivarta*, quoted *Prasannapadā*, p.358).

With this in mind it makes some sense when Mādhyamikas -- those seeking the Middle -- say that reality is beyond both *ātman* and not-*ātman*, as in *Ratnāvalī* 2.3 (quoted *ibid*., p.359):

naivam ātmā na cānātmā yathābhūtyena labhyate /

Or, the same author, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 18.6:

buddhair ātmā na cānātmā kaścid ity api deśitam /

Often, Bhagavat is quoted for the saying:

nāstīha sattva ātmā vā dharmās tv ete sahetukāḥ (*Prasannapadā*, p.355).

Some Buddhists, citing others verses ascribed to Bhagavat, maintained that even though there was no *ātman* or *sattva* here, *iha*, i.e. here in the five *skandha*s or in the six *dhātu*s, it would be a slap in the face of orthodoxy to deny *ātman* in the sense of a Lord, *nātha*, or Witness, *sākṣin*. They would quote Bhagavat's celebrated stanzas to that effect (*Prasannapadā*, p.354):

ātmā hi ātmano nāthaḥ ko nu nāthaḥ paro bhavet /
ātmanā hi sudāntena svargaṃ prāpnoti paṇḍitaḥ //
ātmā hi ātmano nāthaḥ ko nu nāthaḥ paro bhavet /
ātmā hi ātmanaḥ sākṣī kṛtasyāpakṛtasya ca //

This would seem to imply a contradiction. On the one hand Bhagavat confirms the existence of *ātmā* and *sattva* in the sense of *nātha* and *sākṣin*. On

the other Bhagavat also says *nāstīha sattva ātmā vā*. Instead Bhagavat would confirm: *ṣaḍdhātur ayaṃ puruṣapudgalaḥ*: A human being (merely) consists of the six elements (earth, etc.). (For further details, see my paper "Buddhism as *ṣaḍdhātuvāda*" in *The Adyar Library Bulletin* 61, 1997, pp.1-24.)

Commentators of the *Madhyamakaśāstra* would try to solve this apparent contradiction by introducing the hermeneutical principle of *deśanābhiprāya* (*Prasannapadā*, p.355). One has to consider the audience and the context of the Buddha's words.

We, as historians, would want to try to solve the contradiction in an entirely different manner, namely by identifying the original context of the notion of *ātman* as *nātha* and *sākṣin*. It is only *iha*, here in the empirical word of seeing and thinking, that no soul is to be found.

This I have tried to do elsewhere and can therefore be brief here. (See my paper "From Brahmanism to Buddhism", in *Asian Philosophy* 9, 1999, pp. 5-37). What I maintain is that fundamental ideas ascribed by the sources to the historical Buddha, can and should be traced back to *Ṛgveda* 10.129 where they are found if not in ovo then at least in a more primitive form. Here (10.129.7) "he who is in the highest heaven" is identified as the *adhyakṣa*, a witness of "this", probably: the created universe (though not explicit; corresponding to the Buddhist *idaṃ sarvam*, i.e. the five *skandhas*, the six *dhātus*, etc.). I take *adhyakṣa* as a synonym of *sākṣin* or *kṛta* and *apakṛta* (!). The hymn ends by a sort of appeal to him -- not mentioned by name, but, acc. to the commentary = , who knows or knows not, i.e. to some sort of *nātha*, or perhaps even *ātman*. The important point is that *ātman*, in this sense, is somehow above creation, or unborn.

Here it must be recalled that Mahāyāna authors, especially the stotrakāras such as Mātṛceṭa (*Śatapañcāśataka, Varṇārhavarṇastotra,* etc.) regularly hail Bhagavat as *nātha*. From this the way to the canonical Buddhist notion of the Buddha beyond the *sat* and *asat*, the *dvaya*, or duality of *saṃsāra* is obviously not very long. In referring to the Buddha's *bodhi* the canonical texts use the verb *sākṣī-karoti* (Pāli *sacchi-karoti*, cf. *sākṣīkriyā* and *sākṣātkriyā*), synonyms of *adhyakṣa*. The Buddha has replaced the Vedic god as Lord and Witness.

While later Mādhyamikas, such as Bhavya (see Olle Qvarnström, *Hindu Philosophy in Buddhist Perspective*, Lund 1989, pp.92-95; my translation of Bhavya in *Mahāyāna. Den senere indiske buddhisme*, København 1998, pp.204-217) deny the *ātman* when conceived of in terms of being *eka*, *nitya*, *vyāpin*, *kāraka*, etc., they have no problem in accepting *ātman* in the sense of emptiness, lack of *svabhāva*, *paramārtha* etc. In doing so they are, in their own way, keeping consistent with ideas already expressed or alluded to, though obscurely, in RV 10.129: In the beginning, beyond being and non-being, there was

something profound, that One, and it was covered (! *saṃvṛti-satya* !) by darkness (- the darkness of ignorance, as Buddhists later would understand it). The ultimate state is "windless", *a-vātam* -- it is the state of *nir-vāṇa*, the One, wherein the Buddha abides.

2. While the earlier schools ("Hīnayāna"), or most of them, flatly denied the existence of a soul, replacing it with *skandhamātra*, it was a characteristic feature of Mahāyāna that it also advocated the lack of *svabhāva* of even the *skandhas*, *dhātus* etc., cf. e.g. *Lokātatāstava* 2-3 (my *Master of Wisdom*, Berkeley, 1997, p.158): *skandhamātravinirmukto na sattvo 'stīti te matam /*
sattvārthaṃ ca paraṃ khedam agamas tvaṃ mahāmune //
te 'pi skandhās tvayā dhīman dhīmadbhyaḥ saṃprakāśitāḥ /
māyāmarīcigandharvanagarasvapnasaṃnibhāḥ //

Not only is there no soul but even the *skandhas* are *like* illusions.

Nevertheless, Mahāyānasūtras never become tired of extolling bodhisattvas as *mahāsattvas*. There is still room for compassion and liberation.

When it comes to Nāgārjuna, he extols, in two of his works (*Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* and *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, edited and translated in *Master of Wisdom*) the *mahātmans*, the great souls. The term *mahātman* is not canonical, and, if I am not mistaken, Nāgārjuna may have been the first to introduce it into Buddhist philosophical literature. The question then arises, what is his source, and how does he employ this innovative term?

In YṢ 4 it is said that the *mahātmans* become liberated by *bhāvābhāvaparijñāna*. These great souls (*che ba'i bdag ñid can*) have neither *pakṣa* nor *vivāda* (50). The *mahātmans* look upon *bhāva* as *pratibimba* with their *jñānacakṣuḥ* (54). The *mahātmans* have neither *rāga* nor *vairāgya* (58).

Throughout the YS, the author employs as (more or less) synonyms *tattvadarśin* (5), *sat* (7), *dṅos la mkhas pa* (25), *ārya* (28), *mkhas pa* (29, 35, 42), *tattvagaveṣin* (30), *tattvavit* (48), *uttamabuddhi* (55). Opposed to him we find the *bāla* (3, 53), *atattvadarśin* (5), (*rnam par*) *mi mkhas* (12), *dṅos bdag can* = *bhāvātmika* (25), *loka* (29, 37, 53), *astivādin* (40).

It is not only the word *mahātman*, as said, that is not canonical, but also the term *tattva*, and its various compounds. And the term *tattva* is relevant in this context, because it is never denied that a *mahātman* has *jñāna* of *tattva*. He is, in other words, a great soul in the sense that he has, or is gnosis of *tattva*.

If I am not mistaken, as said, these words are first introduced by Nāgārjuna, and then adopted by his followers. What, then, was Nāgārjuna's source? And what did he have in mind?

As I have pointed elsewhere, there is good evidence to assume that Nāgārjuna and his "circle", viz. Āryadeva, Mātṛceṭa, etc., were familiar with the *Bagavadgītā,* and *eo ipso,* also with the *Śvetāśvatara-upaniṣad,* known, of course, to the author of the BG. In these texts *tattva* (first in the ŚU) and *mahātman* are common (for the ref., see G.A. Jacob, *A Concordance to the Principal Upaniṣads and Bhagavadgītā,* Bombay, 1891).

Another loaded technical term not belonging to the earliest strata of Buddhism, is *buddhi.* Nevertheless this term plays a crucial role in Nāgārjuna's thought. Originally *buddhi* seems to belong to a Sāṃkhya context. It becomes common in the metrical Upaniṣads, such as *Kaṭha,* ŚU, etc., and in the BG. (Cf. my "Lokasaṃgraha, Buddhism and Buddhiyoga in the Gītā", in S.P. Narang (Ed.), *Modern Evaluations of the Mahābhārata,* Delhi, 1995, pp.199-220.) In Nāgārjuna it is used, as a rule, as a synonym of *dhī* and *prajñā* and *mati.* Frequently and typically, like its synonyms, it is employed in the instrumental case. It is intimately associated with yoga. Often *buddhi* is described as *agrya,* as *śubha,* as *viśuddha.* As opposed to this the BG says *manyante....abuddhayaḥ* (7.24). Such people are *alpamedhas* (7.23).

Speaking of *tattva,* the BG knows a *tattvavit* who, as in YṢ 5 (above) *na manyate* (5.8 also 3.28), and it knows the *tattvadarśin* who "sees" the *anta* of *sat/bhāva* and *asat/abhāva* (2.16). Such a *tattvadarśin* has *jñāna* (4.34). By means of his *buddhi,* says Nāgārjuna (YṢ 17), the wise man sees everything to be like a *marīci,* and thus he transcends duality. Compare BG 2.16.

The term *tattva* first seems to occur (at least in writing) in ŚU 6.3 (based on the Śvetaketu passage in the *Chāndogya* 6.8-16). It then becomes frequent in BG and in the *Mahābhārata* in general. Probably Nāgārjuna has it from the study of these sources. There are numerous indications that he enjoyed a broad Sanskrit learning.

It is not at all impossible that the same observation applies to *bhāva,* of which the *Akutobhayā* says (as pointed out by Leonard Priestley, in N.K. Wagle & F. Watanabe (eds.), *Studies on Buddhism in Honour of Professor A.K. Warder,* Toronto 1993, p.126), "the term *bhāva* is the usual one among tīrthikas". Priestley is right in saying that Nāgārjuna's own use of the term ... appears, "at first sight at least, to be an innovation" (p.124). Even in pre-Nāgārjuna texts such as *Samādhirāja* (which knows *bhāva, abhāva,* etc.) the original background sees to be Sāṃkhya. (On *bhāva,* see also van Buitenen in L. Rocher (ed.), *Studies in Indian Literature and Philosophy,* Delhi, 1988, pp.43-51).

That Nāgārjuna is very much aware of Sāṃkhya and its limitations is proved by a verse from his *Ratnāvalī* 1.61:

sasāṃkhyaulūkyanirgranthapudgalaskandhavādinam /
pṛccha lokaṃ yadi vadaty astināstivyatikramam //

It is, I take it, on this background probable, that basic technical terms in his own way of thinking were borrowed and adapted by Nāgārjuna from Sāṃkhya (mainly as known to the *Mahābhārata*): *tattva*, *buddhi*, *bhāva* (*abhāva*).

In YṢ 55 we read:

bālāḥ sajjanti rūpeṣu vairāgyaṃ yānti madhyamāḥ /
svabhāvajñā vimucyante rūpasyottamabuddhayaḥ //

Here, three groups of people are mentioned. The third group, the most advanced, is characterized by having an *uttamabuddhi*. It is implied that there are also two lower kinds of *buddhi*, though not explicitly mentioned.

The BG 18.29-32 likewise distinguishes between three kinds of *buddhi*. The highest form is *sāttvikī*, and it knows the distinction between *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*, *bandha* and *mokṣa*, etc. (30). The second form, the *rājasī*, understands *ayathāvat* (31), whereas the third, the *tāmasī*, entirely misunderstands everything (32). Likewise, there are three kinds of *jñāna*, BG 18.20-22. The one that sees one *bhāva* in all things is *sāttvika* (20), whereas the one that sees the various *bhāva*s apart (*pṛthak*) is *rājasa* (21). Eventually, thanks to his *viśuddhabuddhi* (51), he becomes *viviktasevī* and finally is *vairāgyaṃ samupāśritaḥ* (52).

YṢ 55, quoted above, can be seen as a critical comment on this. As opposed to the BG, Buddhism knows an ideal beyond even *vairāgya* (*Nagarjuniana*, p.117; *Suttanipāta* 795: *na rāgarāgī na virāgaratto...*; Kambala's *Ālokamālā* 34: ... *dvayaṃ mithyā rāgo vairāgyam eva ca*; etc.). Since BG probably borrows the term *vairāgya* from some Buddhist sources it is not without some triumph that Nāgārjuna finds an occasion to correct them.

This then shows not only Nāgārjuna's general Sanskrit background, but also his characteristic inclusivism, or syncretism. The term *mahātman* is used in the Upaniṣads, and in the *Mahābhārata* (BG), as far as I can see, in the double sense of God (Kṛṣṇa etc.) and God's devotees (Arjuna etc.). I.e. it means *deus* as well as *divinus/divus*, the great soul, and those who share in, or are identical with that soul. Clearly, with its theistic origins, it is not originally a Buddhist term. When introduced into Mahāyāna, it became a synonym of Ārya, yogin, *dhīmat*, bodhisattva, etc. Or even more precisely, bodhisattvas were always, in the *sūtra*s, described as *mahāsattva*s (here the *-sattva* may also have Sāṃkhya origins), either great beings, or (men) of great goodness. Since the ultimate aim of bodhisattvas mahāsattvas was invariably to become buddha bhagavats, a similar *deus-divus* relationship is also reflected here. (Compare here van Buitenen's fine study of "The Large ātman", *op.cit.*, pp.209-221.)

When it comes to *tat-tva*, as said, its presence in Mahāyāna texts is also to be explained along inclusivistic lines. It, too, has been "borrowed" from outsiders. If I am not mistaken, it is never found in the earlier canonical texts. It first seems to occur in the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* under the influence of the celebrated instruction of Uddālaka Āruṇi to his son Śvetaketu (CU 6.8-16). Here the instruction concluded: *sa ya eṣo 'ṇimaitadātmyam idaṃ sarvam, tat satyam, sa ātmā, tat tvam asi Śvetaketo iti. - bhūya eva mā bhagavān vijñāpayatv iti* (9 times).

The term *tattva(m)*, then, was formed from *tat* and *tvam* to indicate the iden-ti-ty of the *tat* and the *tvam*, the that and the thou, the object and the subject, the identity of macro- and microcosm. Of course, the Greek words microcosm and macrocosm are not found in the Indian texts, but they correspond very well to the (apparent) opposition between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, as we shall see.

This idea was adopted by Mahāyāna and found its expression in several ways. For instance, in his main work, the MMK, Nāgārjuna provides the following definition (*lakṣaṇa*) of *tattva* (18.9):

aparapratyayaṃ śāntaṃ prapañcair aprapañcitam /
nirvikalpam anānārtham etat tattvasya lakṣaṇam //

And from MMK 18.5 we learn that

karmakleśakṣayān mokṣaḥ karmakleśā vikalpataḥ /
te prapañcāt prapañcas tu śūnyatāyāṃ nirudhyate //

In other words: *tattva*, much the same as *mokṣa*, is to be found beyond *vikalpa* and *prapañca*, *in* emptiness (*śūnyatā*). We also learn that the Buddha (*tathāgata*) and this world (*idaṃ jagat*), are, in the sense that they have no *svabhāva*, somehow the same (22.16), and that there is really no difference between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, as in 25.10 (cf. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* 1.6):

nirvāṇasya ca yā koṭiḥ koṭiḥ saṃsaraṇasya ca /
na tayor antaraṃ kiṃcit susūkṣmam api vidyate //

This, then, is fully consistent with YṢ 5-6:

saṃsāraṃ caiva nirvāṇaṃ manyante 'tattvadarśinaḥ /
na saṃsāraṃ na nirvāṇaṃ manyante tattvadarśinaḥ //
nirvāṇaṃ ca bhavaś caiva dvayam etan na vidyate /
parijñānaṃ bhavasyaiva nirvāṇam iti kathyate //

In other words, to sum up for now, to see *tattva* is to see that the normal duality between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* is only apparent. There is no real *dvayam*. But it is not denied that there be a *tattvajñāna* (*Nagarjuniana*, p.156/157), even

though it is impossible to explain what this *tattva* is, for *jñāna*, logically must always depend on a *jñeya*. (Here *jñāna* = *vijñāna*.)

We can here speak of the fundamental law of origination in correlation, *pratītyasamutpāda*. Nothing exists in and by itself. Everything is interrelated. There is no *sat* without *asat*, not *bhāva* without *abhāva*, etc. etc. And, likewise, Dharma, in the singular, is bound up with dharmas, in the plural. Dharma somehow (through *avidyā*, *kāma*, etc.) manifests (itself) as manifold dharmas. Behind, or rather *in* pluralism we find monism.

Some sources (esp. the *Śālistambasūtra*) identify the Dharma, the Buddha and *pratītyasamutpāda*. See my remarks in *Buddhist Studies Review* 15/1, 1998, pp.107-116; and, for a Danish translation of this fundamental text, *Hīnayāna. Den tidlige indiske buddhisme*, København 1998, pp.149-166.

Once again, this reflects the apparent duality of *śūnyatāvāda*. On the one hand Buddha Bhagavat is *bodhi*, he has, or is, a body of Dharma, but he also teaches many a dharma -- all the dharmas, in particular the five *skandha*s, the twelve *āyatana*s, the eighteen *dhātu*s that, from various angles, have the feature in common, that they constitute *sarvam*, everything.

It is only on this background -- once all this is kept in mind -- that one can deal properly with the question of the soul in Madhyamaka Buddhism.

3. As van Buitenen pointed out, "The "large *ātman*" is the original creator, who, or which, has, as it were, embodied himself in creation" (*loc.cit.*, pp.210-211), and -- now speaking of *buddhi* -- "... in the final analysis *mahān* and *buddhi* were no rivals, as in many respects *mahān* paralleled *buddhi*" (p.212).

Referring to the terms *buddhisattva* and *mahāsattva* in the *Mahābhārata*, van Buitenen, p.90, also observes: "Here again we notice how close *buddhi* and *sattva* are: *sattva* is the unaffected state of *buddhi*, free from *rajas* and *tamas*." And van Buitenen, on p.96, mentions *mahāsattva* as opposed to *alpasattva*. This obviously corresponds to the frequent Buddhist *mahāprajña* (*gambhīraprajña*, both adj.) as opposed to *alpabuddhi*, and the like.

Also, there is an important set of texts in the *Mahābhārata* (12.187, 239-40) having to do with early Sāṃkhya, including the terms *bhāva* and *buddhi*. It has been discussed by Frauwallner and van Buitenen (*op.cit.*, p.43). What must now be realized is that there are allusions to this in Nāgārjuna's YṢ.

Here are a few quotes from 187 (van Buitenen, p.44):

puruṣādhiṣṭhitā buddhir triṣu bhāveṣu vartate / 21ab
evaṃ naraṇāṃ manasi triṣu bhāveṣv avasthitā / 22cd
seyaṃ bhāvātmikā bhāvāṃs trīn etān nātivartate /
saritāṃ sāgaro bhartā mahāvelām ivormimān / 23

atibhāvagatā buddhir bhāve manasi vartate /
pravartamānaṃ hi rajas tad bhāvam anuvartate // 24
indriyāṇi hi sarvāṇi pradarśayati sā sadā / 25ab
ye ye ca bhāvā loke 'smin sarveṣv eteṣu te triṣu /
iti buddhigatiḥ sarvā vyākhyātā tava bhārata // 26

And from 240:

mano prasṛjyate bhāvaṃ buddhir adhyavasāyinī / 1ab
yadā vikurute bhāvaṃ tadā bhavati sā manaḥ / 3ab
indriyāṇāṃ pṛthagbhāvād buddhir vikriyate hy aṇu / 4ab
tiṣṭhatī puruṣe buddhis triṣu bhāveṣu vartate / 6cd
seyaṃ bhāvātmikā bhāvāṃs trīn etān ativartate /
saritāṃ sāgaro bhartā mahāvelām ivormimān // 8
avibhāgagatā buddhir bhāve manasi vartate /
pravartamānaṃ tu rajaḥ sattvam apy anuvartate // 10

In 204 the *bhāvās* are described as *svabhāvahetujāḥ* (st. 3, cf. van Buitenen, p.49). These verses seem to have been known to Nāgārjuna. Thus MMK 1.3 can be taken as a reply to the above: *na hi svabhāvo bhāvānāṃ pratyayādiṣu vidyate* (*hetu* is the first *pratyaya*, v. 2). Of course, Nāgārjuna retorts, *bhāvas* are never causes by their own *svabhāva*, but rather on the basis of various causes and conditions. Of the above passage there are also echoes in Nāgārjuna's YṢ, as when YṢ 1 states: *astināstivyatikrāntā*, speaking of *buddhi* (consistently with and closely related to *Ratnāvalī* 1.61-62, q.v.). The in Buddhist texts otherwise unparalleled expression *dṅos bdag can*, YṢ 24a, finally finds its explanation in *bhāvātmika*, above. Also *pṛthagbhāva*, MMK 6.6, may be an echo of the *Mahābhārata* passage on Sāṃkhya cited above. (Cf. also *Kaṭhopaniṣad* 6.6 for this term.)

For Nāgārjuna *buddhi* becomes - as opposed to Sāṃkhya in the *Mahābhārata* -- the faculty that transcends *asti* and *nāsti* (YṢ 1). Nāgārjuna himself, as indicated by *Ratnāvalī* 1.61, was conscious and explicit about the unique approach of Madhyamaka in this regard. Consequently, those who still hang on to the *asti* and *nāsti* of *bhāvas*, are condemned as *alpabuddhi* (MK 5.8 -- cf. BG 16.9b). The *mandamedhas* (a term known from Vopadeva) is destroyed by *durdṛṣṭā śūnyatā*, according to MMK 24.11.

The numerous disdainful remarks about *cala-manas* in YṢ also become understandable in this light. (As they also do, of course, when seen in the light of yoga in general: *yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ*.)

Once adopted by Mahāyāna -- and this happened before Nāgārjuna (see e.g. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, with its many trances of Sāṃkhya influence, *passim*) --- *buddhi* becomes a natural *paryāya* of *prajñā* -- a term, needless to say, so characteristic (though already found in the early Upaniṣads) of Mahāyāṇa, that it is even known as Prajñāpāramitāyāna. The title of the main *śāstra*, Nāgārjuna's MMK, let us not forget, is also given as Prajñā. The output of literature is enormous, see, e.g. E. Conze, *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature,* Tokyo 1978.

Roughly *prajñā* means scientific analysis in terms of what dharmas (even *bhāvas*) are or are not. Madhyamaka gives the term its own very special touch when it sees it as the task of *prajñā* to determine that things have no *svabhāva* of their own. Most eloquent in this regard is the paragraph on *prajñā* as one of the 39 kinds of *cittasaṃprayuktasaṃskāra*, in Candrakīrti's *Pañcaskandha-prakaraṇa* (ed. *Acta Orientalia* 40, 1979, pp.110-121). Once *prajñā* has reached its culmination, once it is *pāramitā*, gone or brought beyond (namely, the duality, *sat* and *asat*), it becomes *jñāna* without any object.

4. These circumstantial matters had to be mentioned -- some of the observations will also be new to scholars -- in order to approach the question about the Madhyamaka view of the soul from a proper angle. It seemed appropriate to focus on the rational part of the soul. Perhaps it is not that important, after all, whether man has a soul or not. The important thing is that he is reasonable, that he has *buddhi*, or *prajñā*.

If and when we, as conscious and more or less rational creatures ask ourselves why the notion or concept of a soul (a self) seems desirable or even necessary, we find -- naturally that this question has been faced by philosophers in ancient Greece and India also. We should make our own ideas clear to ourselves, also to avoid unconsciously reading something foreign into the Indian texts.

Why do we -- in Europe or India -- feel it desirable or necessary to postulate the existence of a soul? Let us first briefly listen to what some of our predecessors have to say about this issue!

Vaiśeṣikasūtra 3.2.4: "The ascending and descending vital airs, the opening and closing of the eyes, life, motions of the internal organ, affections of the other organs of sense, pleasure and pain, desire and aversion, and volition, are marks of the existence of the soul" (*prāṇāpānanimeṣonmeṣajīvanamanogatīndri-yāntaravikārāḥ sukhaduḥkhecchādveṣaprayatnāś ca cātmano liṅgāni*). VS 3.2.2 assigns *dravyatva* and *nityatva* to the *ātman*, as to e.g. wind. Likewise *Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.10: *icchā-dveṣa-prayatna-sukha-duḥkha-jñānāny ātmano liṅgam*. These *sūtras* conveniently summarize the main arguments of ancient

Indian philosophers in favor of maintaining the existence of what we may call a soul, or a self.

In general, Bauddhas, from the very beginning, would reject this idea of the soul as a *dravya* or something *nitya* that has or is these things. The phenomena mentioned are empirical facts, true, but simply occur based on certain conditions. There is no need no valid reason to postulate an *ātman* to account for the empirical or logical facts.

The Buddhist texts frequently refute *ātmavāda*. For the early period one may consult the sources collected in F.O. Schrader, *Kleine Schriften*, Wiesbaden 1983, pp.38-46; for the later period Olle Qvarnström, *Hindu Philosophy in Buddhist Perspective*, Lund 1989, *passim*. The arguments of Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośa*, are well-known. The less known sources include the commentaries of Bhavya and Avalokitavrata on Nāgārjuna's MMK 18. Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka*, with the commentaries of Dharmapāla and Candrakīrti, would also deserve a separate study.

5. It may, at first sight, seem somewhat of a paradox, that while the Bauddhas, as a rule, reject the various beliefs in a permanent, active, conscious and immortal soul, this by no means implies that they reject the ideal of immortality. In fact, they would (some of them with reservations about the term *vita*, though) agree with the old Danish bishop Anders Sunesön, who introduces his *Hexaëmeron* with these lines (ed. M.Cl. Gertz, Havniae, 1892, p.1):

aeterna vita nihil est felicius usquam,
aeterna morte nihil infelicius...

And Jesus, if we are to trust John 17:3, also believed in eternal life: "This is eternal life: to know thee who alone art truly God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Life eternal has to do with knowledge (*gnosis*, *jñāna*), i.e. with gnosis of God. And Didymos Judas Thomas records as the first of "the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke": "Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings, will not taste death."

Greeks and Romans, not merely the philosophers, believed their gods to be immortal, and most primitive religions believe in some sort of existence after death. For Zarathustra, Amərətāt (as Latin immortālitās) was one of the six divinities, the Aməša Spənta-s. So much has been written on this that one would, if I may say so, have to be almost as immortal as the gods themselves to find time to read it all! (for an early survey, see e.g. "Unsterblichkeit", in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Tübingen 1913).

A systematic study of the term *amṛta* and its compounds in Buddhist texts would show that an immortal soul, or immortal life, was replaced by an immortal place, or an immortal state, viz. *nirvāṇa*. It was a state that could be attained through knowledge (*jñāna*). Bhavya, the Mādhyamika, for instance, often speaks of *tattva-amṛta-jñāna* to this effect. To be sure, it is generally held to be a state, a *pada*, that transcends *sat* and *asat*, and all other positive or negative states of this life.

As for India one may start with the celebrated *Puruṣasūkta*, i.e. *Ṛgveda* 10.90. Its importance, historically and philosophically, is next only to that of RV 10.129, the *Nāsadāsīya* hymn of creation (emanation). (For an excellent discussion of both hymns one may still refer to Paul Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, I,1, Leipzig, 1920, pp.119-127 & 150-158.)

We here learn of the enormous man, *puruṣa*, a cosmic giant, that is this all, that has been and that will be. He is the Lord of immortality. A fourth of him is all beings, three-fourths of him are what is immortal in heaven. The gods, performing the sacrifice, from various parts of him produced the air, the sky, the earth, and the quarters.

This very ancient Vedic (and even Indo-European) vision of a primaeval giant, whose parts, through a creation seen as sacrifice, become portions of the universe, and who thus remains partly mortal, partly immortal, also inspired the Buddhist view of the *mahāpuruṣa*. A bodhisattva is invariably also a *mahāsattva*. And not only later but even the earliest Buddhist texts speak of the *mahāpuruṣa* and his major and minor marks. Nāgārjuna explains the thirty-two marks of the Buddha as a *mahāpuruṣa* in *Ratnāvalī* 2.77-96. Fearing that the text would be too long, he says (97), he will not explain the eighty minor marks.

The Buddhist (especially Mahāyāna) ideal, there can be no doubt, is to become such a *mahāpuruṣa* by following the curriculum of a bodhisattva. A Buddha has two bodies, a spiritual and a physical. The former is the result of the *jñānasaṃbhāra*, the latter is the result of *puṇyasaṃbhāra*. Together, once *bodhisaṃbhāra* has been completed, they constitute buddhahood. The spiritual body is immortal, the physical mortal.

As the various Buddhist dictionaries testify, *amṛta* is a synonym of *nirvāṇa*. In Madhyamaka texts *amṛta* often occurs in compounds describing the teaching of the Buddha, e.g. *śāsana-amṛta*, and *tattva(jñāna)amṛta*. This means that the gnosis of *amṛta* is communicated though the *pravacana* of the Buddha who himself is gnosis. His (mortal) physical body, is literally an expression of his (immortal) spiritual. In the hymns of Mātṛceṭa (a good source for Madhyamaka notions of *amṛta*) the immortal is usually perceived through the ears, but there are also texts suggesting that *amṛta* can be consumed by drinking. In any case,

amṛta comes from above. It is, in India too, the immortal *verbum dei*. (For more on the immortality of man, the drink of immortality, etc., see e.g. A.B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, Cambridge, Mass., 1925, p.653 (ref.). Étienne Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, Louvain-Leuven, 1962, p.458 (ref.)) The old Indo-European ideal of immortality continues as an ideal state among the ancient Buddhist philosophers even though they reject the notion of an immortal soul, or immortal gods.

It is sometimes claimed that the doctrine of *bodhisaṃbhāra*, and the double body of the Buddha is peculiar to Mahāyāna. True, it is emphasized in Mahāyāna, but its roots are, as indicated, very old. And when the oldest canonical scriptures speak of the Buddha Bhagavat as *arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno*, the last compound -- *vidyācaraṇasaṃpanna* in Sanskrit -- is probably more than merely precursory of *puṇyajñānasaṃbhāra* constituting *bodhisaṃbhāra*.

In India (as elsewhere) the notion of "the double man" -- partly immortal, partly mortal -- is found in several forms. It is intimately related to the doctrines about two truths, about two kinds of *bodhicitta*, two kinds (as said) of *bodhisaṃbhāra*, and about two kinds of Brahman (Brahman and Brahmā), etc.

Issues concerning the existence of the soul are not only philosophical but also religious. The line may be difficult to draw.

Paul Deussen in his book *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, New York 1906 (p.45), made a general useful observation: "The necessary premises of all religion are, as Kant frequently expounds: - (1) The existence of God, (2) the immortality of the soul, (3) the freedom of the will (without which no morality is possible). These three essential conditions of man's salvation -- God, immortality, and freedom -- are conceivable only if the universe is mere appearance and not reality (mere *māyā* and not the *ātman*), and they break down irretrievably should this empirical reality, wherein we live, be found to constitute the true essence of things."

Deussen's observation, as a historian and as a philosopher, provides a good angle from which the problem of the soul in Buddhism can be approached. It cannot really be isolated -- as I have also attempted to point out above -- from questions concerning immortality, liberation, karma, God, etc.

To all Bauddhas, of course, salvation is the ultimate goal, the summum bonum. But would it not appear, that since they deny the existence of God (as creator of the world), and since they deny the existence of the soul -- and therefore also immortality, as its attribute, and finally, since they insist on the irretrievable law of karma -- that they fulfill not one single of the three conditions deemed essential (above) for *mokṣa*?

The answer, again, of course depends on what is understood by god, soul, free will -- and immortality. I have tried to show that the ideal of an immortal state can be maintained without assuming the existence of an immortal soul in the empirical sense of that term. Often the Indian gods were conceived as creators, omniscient, omnipotent, etc. Such notions were rejected and ridiculed by the Bauddhas. (Nice examples found e.g. in Udbhaṭasiddhasvāmin's *Viśiṣṭastava*, and Bhavya's *Madhyamakahṛdaya*, both of which have been translated in my *Hīnayāna. Den tidlige indiske buddhisme*, and *Mahāyāna. Den senere indiske buddhisme*, København 1998, pp.195-209 and 106-241). In Madhyamaka there is no immortal soul, no immortal gods. But there is immortality. There is no agent, but there is activity, and thus also development, and causality. The ultimate ideal is to overcome mortality.

Already in the Upaniṣads concerns about *amṛta* (*amṛtatvam*) had reached a high level of speculation (see G.A. Jacob, *op.cit.*, pp.102 ff. for *amṛta* and its compounds). From some of the older and most typical passages here is what we learn. Gods or men of intelligence can become (*bhū-*) immortal. It is by means of knowledge (*vidyā, jñā-*) -- not merely by drinking Soma -- that one sees, finds, experiences, obtains or becomes (the) immortal. The immortal, as opposed to death and old age, is said to be *abhayam*, without fear, as is *nirvāṇa*. The immortal is identified with Brahman and with the innermost *ātman*, and with life (*prāṇa*). There are allusions to the *Puruṣasūkta* (RV 10.90), according to which, as said, three-fourths of the great *puruṣa* is the immortal in heaven (*amṛtaṃ divi*, 3). In heaven we find nothing mortal. In short, man (*puruṣa, ātman*) shares the double nature of Brahman (in the crucial passage BU 2.3.1 already referred to): *dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe... martyaṃ cāmṛtaṃ ca...* .

In short, mortal men and mortal gods, through knowledge (not merely rituals), can and should become immortal, and thus free from further fear of *mṛtyu*, etc. And this happens once the identity of *tat* and *tvam*, the identity of the microcosm and the macrocosm is found, or realized.

The ideals of early Buddhism did not differ essentially from this, though the *mārga* proposed was certainly novel and original. The early canonical scriptures are replete with passages concerning *amata* (CPD I, pp.387-390). It is not the soul that is immortal, to be sure. Instead the sources see the immortal as a *pada* or a *dhātu* which is but a synonym of *nirvāṇa*. It is something impersonal that can be achieved, a stage that can be reached -- *adhigata* is the frequent verb. -- Often *amata* / *amṛta* or *nirvāṇa*, is related with juice or water, or nectar etc. Two elements, water and wind, are thus associated. In my opinion a simple explanation is to be found once we relate this to the cosmogonic speculations of RV 10.129 -- the primeval waters moved by the wind. (In this novel perspective

otherwise obscure terms such as, CPD,I, p.390; *an-amat'-agga*, typically said of *saṃsāra*, CPD I, p.156, and several other early, otherwise obscure terms, suddenly find a simple explanation, cf. my paper "From Brahmanism to Buddhism", in *Asian Philosophy*, above.)

Madhyamaka, in short, sought the Middle in emptiness, the profound beyond *sat* and *asat*, but as "middle" also in the midst of *sat* and *asat*. It can be experienced, but not as an empirical object of any kind. If one calls this the immortal soul, there is no harm, as long as "soul" is understood to be a mere word.

6. And so Nāgārjuna and his followers can also consistently speak of the great souls (*mahātman*). From Latin we have the word magnanimity, greatness of soul. We can trace it back to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, iv.3, *megalopsykhía* (see *Oxford English Dictionary*, p.1186). A comparative study of magnanimity from Greek, Roman, and Indian (Buddhist) sources would be of great interest in our context.

Here are but a few references to Cicero. In his great book, *De Officiis* he mentions *magnanimitas* as the third of the four parts of *honestas*, 1.43.152. He speaks of *viri, fortes, magnanimi*, 1.19.63; and of *elatio et magnitudo animi*, 1.19.64; *fortes igitur et magnanimi sunt habendi non qui faciunt, sed qui propulsant injuriam*, 1.19.65.

It is this very spirit of magnanimity, *mutatis mutandis*, that also breathes in the works of early, Indian Mādhyamikas such as Nāgārjuna, Mātṛceṭa, Bhavya, etc.

In India the great souls styled themselves *śūnyatāvādins* (*Vigrahavyāvartanī* 69, from *Kāśyapaparivarta* §123), or Mādhyamika, from Madhyamaka, said of the *darśana*, or *śāstra*, concerned with the *Madhya*, the Middle (as understood in the *Kāśyapaparivarta* §§ 52-60, an essay on *madhyamā pratipat*).

When these philosophers seek *tattvajñāna*, they, as Śūnyatāvādins, identify *tattva* as *śūnyatā*, and, as Mādhyamikas, as *madhyam*. They "describe" *madhyam* in much the same terms that other schools describe *tattva*. Their approach, as opposed to that of others, is described as *madhyamā pratipat*.

KP §§ 52-60 is an essay on the concept of *madhyamā pratipat* (mp). It starts by asking for a definition of *sarvadharmāṇāṃ bhūtapratyavekṣā*. The answer is that when a bodhisattva has the *pratyavekṣā* that there is no *ātman*, no *sattva*, no *jīva*, no *poṣa*, no *pudgala*, no *manuja*, no *mānava*, then this is the mp: Likewise, the five *skandhas* (§53), the six *dhātus* (§54), and the twelve *āyatanas* (§55) must not be taken as either *nitya* or *anitya*. This is also the mp.

The mp approach that avoids the two *antas* (*dvaya*!) of *nitya* and *anitya* can now be "defined" in six terms, viz. *arūpi(n)*, *anidarśana*, *anābhāsa*, *avijñaptika*, *apratiṣṭha*, and *aniketa*. (Presumably, each of these terms has its own historical background that deserves to be carefully traced.) Other noteworthy *antas* to be avoided on the mp are *ātman* and *nairātmya* (§57), *bhūtacitta* and *abhūtacitta* (§58), *saṃkleśa* and *vyavadāna* (§59) (allusions to "early Yogācāra"?), as well as the two *antas* of *asti* and *nāsti*, and even of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* (§60).

In brief, the mp here expounded by KP avoids *antas* having to do with *ātma*, *skandha*, *saṃsāra*, *nirvāṇa*. Instead it finds the truth about all *dharmas* in the *madhyam*, defined as *arūpi(n)*, *anidarśana*, etc., as we have seen.

It is, as said, by means of *prajñā* (*buddhi*, *dhī*, etc.) that a bodhisattva is enabled to go beyond the two *antas* of *asti* and *nāsti*, etc. Thus *parīkṣā*, with the help of *prajñā*, is instrumental in bringing about *jñāna* of *śūnyatā*, or of *advaya*, i.e. of *madhyam*.

The concern with the Middle, an *aurea mediocritas*, the center of things, the *coincidentia oppositorum* is not entirely new or innovative on the part of the Bauddha Mādhyamikas. They were inspired by the *Kāśyapaparivarta*, which, again, was inspired by earlier canonical sources, above all the *Dharmacakrapravartana*: *ubho ante anupagamma majjhena Tathāgato dhammaṃ deseti*. Dharama as the Middle.

But even when it comes to the Middle, there are precursors. There are passages in the Upaniṣads suggesting that *tattva* was understood in the sense of (something) *madhya* (see G.A. Jacob, *op.cit.*, for ref.). If *śūnya* is understood as zero, it, as such, like *madhya*, lies between positive and negative.

Notions having to do with zero, middle and empty can also be traced back to the Profound (*gabhīra*), that which was covered by the void, in the beginning (RV 10.129).

The Middle is closely related to the Profound, in Buddhist texts also. As a rule, *gambhīra* is said of Dharma, in the singular (RĀ 1.75), as well as in the plural. By extension the *deśanā* and *śāsana* of the Buddha(s) is also *gambhīra*. Likewise, the *bodhi* of the Buddha(s) is *gambhīra* (KP § 139). Since, as said, it is by means of *buddhi* that *astināstivyatikrama* becomes possible, it is understandable that compounds describing the Buddha, such as *dharmagāmbhīrya* (RĀ 1.74) and *buddhigāmbhīrya* (*Śatapañcāśatka* 35) are used. Also *pratyayārtha*, in YṢ 1, is said to be *gambhīra*. This becomes understandable when we recall that *pratyayārtha* is short for *pratītyasamutpāda*, which, again, in the *Śālistamba* (known to all early Mādhyamikas) is identified with Dharma and Buddha. The Dharma and the pp that is *gambhīra* is also said to be *nirālamba* (YṢ 1), *anālaya* (RĀ 1.75,76), *niṣparigraha* (RĀ 1.75), *sūkṣma*

and *gambhīradarśana* (RĀ 1.25), even *atisūkṣma*, along, again with *gambhīra* and *anālaya*, now said of the *saddharma* (RĀ 2.17). On the whole this choice of terminology is canonical (see *Catuṣpariṣatsūtra*, often quoted by Mādhyamikas, and translated in my *Hīnayāna*, pp.13-59). It reflects the Buddha's discovery of the Dharma. The *buddhi* that transcends *asti* and *nāsti* must be *nirāśraya* (YS 1).

So, again, the great soul follows the Middle Path to *bodhi* so as become a *mahāpuruṣa* with two bodies. Keeping this in mind, it is rather misleading to claim that the Buddhists deny the existence of the soul.

In my mind there can hardly be any doubt that this ideal of a *mahāpuruṣa*, as the highest ideal of Mahāyāna, should be traced back to old Indo-European (Aryan) ideas of a superman, the most important source of which, in India, would, it goes without saying, be RV 10.90. Without the old Indo-European *mahāpuruṣa* ideal there would be no such movement as Mahāyāna.

Not only so. There would also be no Christianity! What, for instance, is the mortal body of Jesus without the immortal body of Christ? The idea of Jesus Christ (or rather Jesus *and* Christ) is typically Indo-European. But that, of course, is a different story! Finally, it may be mentioned, that without any direct influence from India similar ideas of a transcendental, permanent and endless Middle as the origin of creation, may be found in the speculative cosmology of the Danish philosopher Frederik Christian Sibbern, (1785-1872).

7. *Sources*. Some fundamental Madhyamaka texts refuting various erroneous notions about the soul, or self.

I. When Nāgārjuna, as a Mādhyamika, says that the soul does not exist, what he means to say, more precisely, is that no *pudgala* can be found in the six elements. His extensive argument is to be found in his *Ratnāvalī* 1.80-2.2, to which I here refer the reader. Once we look for the person in the six elements, we shall not find it. There is no person apart from the elements (nor do the six elements, for that matter, exist in and by themselves). Likewise, he says that no *ātman* is to be found in the five *skandha*s. This argument is to be found in his MMK, Chapter 18. With an appeal to experience and reason he argues as follows:

First of all, it may be asked whether the so-called *ātman* is identical with the five *skandha*s, or are the *skandha*s quite different? Surely, the "self" is not identical with the *skandha*s, for in that case it would participate in birth and decay. It is understood that the hypothetical "self" must somehow be permanent, one, etc. to make sense. On the other hand, if it were absolutely different from the *skandha*s it would be permanent, and we could do nothing about it. It would not, as permanent, be active. (1)

Since the self cannot, as seen, be grasped, there is nothing that belongs to it. How can anything belong to nothing? By means of our *buddhi* we now see that when self and mine are appeased, one becomes selfless and mineless. (2)

Even though selfless and mineless are real, there is no such thing as a self that "is" self- and mineless. (3)

Once the clinging to self and mine has thus been abandoned, there is no longer any appropriation. When it ceases, rebirth also ceases. (4)

At this stage Nāgārjuna can conclude that liberation is due to the cessation of karma and passions. Karma and passions are due to concepts; and concepts are due to *prapañca*, the expansion of language. But *prapañca* is stopped in emptiness. In other words, one is reborn due to karma and passions. This is due to the activity of *vikalpa*, which, again, is due to *prapañca*. The activity of *prapañca* can be stopped in emptiness, i.e. in the gnosis of *tattva*. The attainment of *tattva* is the same as liberation. (5)

It does, however, take time to realize emptiness. Sometimes the Buddhas have said that there is a self, or that there is no self, or that there is neither self nor non-self. True, there thus seems to be a contradiction in the Buddhist scriptures. (6)

But the contradiction is merely apparent, for once *prapañca* has stopped in emptiness, as indicated above, everything that can be expressed in words has, of course, also disappeared. This happens, as always in yoga, once mind has ceased its normal activities. More precisely, when the yogin, by means of *prajñā* that ends in *jñāna*, we may add, has seen for himself (through *bhāvanā*) that everything is empty. This, according to the Madhyamakadarśana is the nature of things, or *nirvāṇa*. It goes without saying, that at this stage self is as empty as no self. (7)

It is now understood that the Buddha's teaching is based on two truths. The relative truth has to do with language and practice. At this stage a distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, true and false, etc. must, of course, be made. The absolute truth, or *tattva*, is beyond any kind of duality (*dvaya*). (8)

For purpose of communication one can speak of the "mark" of *tattva*: it is incommunicable, quiescent, unconceptualized by conceptualization, not discursive, not differentiated -- that is the mark of (the absolute) truth. (9) The truth also manifests itself as a principle of causality: That dependent upon which x arises, is, first of all, not identical with that. But it is not different either. Therefore the truth, as a principle of causality, avoids the extremes of annihilation and permanence. (10) The ambrosial message of the Buddhas is, consequently, not of one meaning, nor of many meanings, and it avoids annihilation as well as permanence. (11)

True, the absolute truth is difficult to attain. There are three degrees of *jñāna*. The Buddhas know that things do not originate, that they are unborn; the disciples merely understand that things are impermanent; finally the pratyekabuddhas attain *jñāna* by not being involved with their mind or body.

This chapter, in brief, confirms that Nāgārjuna's ideal of liberation has to do with the attainment of *advaya-* or *śūnyatājñāna*. Madhyamaka is a Buddhist form of gnosticism that, through analytical knowledge of causality, transcends the duality of micro- and macrocosm.

He certainly rejects self and non-self understood in terms of an entity understood as something permanent, a unity, an agent, etc. (or the negation of that). But if the self (or non-self) be understood in terms of *jñāna*, i.e. *advaya-* or *śūnyatājñāna*, why should he reject it? The *mahātman*, as he confirms, has, or is, this *jñāna*.

In the commentary of Candrakīrti the title of this chapter is simply *ātmaparīkṣā*, Investigation of the Soul. The title of the chapter given by the earlier commentators is *ātmadharmaparīkṣā*. It has been demonstrated that *ātman* cannot be conceived as on object of knowledge. The reality of *jñāna*, however, has not been denied by Nāgārjuna or any of his later commentators.

Distinctions are to be made between the various kinds of *jñāna*. That of the Buddhas, as we have seen, has to do with *anutpāda*, or *śūnyatā*, the fact or law of nature, that all dharmas are unborn, or empty, in the sense that they lack *svabhāva*. The highest form of knowledge or gnosis, then, has to do with the unborn -- an old Vedic notion fundamental in Mahāyāna also.

It must not be overlooked that *jñāna*, from the root *jñā-*, is related to *vi-jñāna*, *pra-jñā*, *ā-jñā*, *pari-jñāna*, *abhi-jñā*(*na*), and *saṃ-jñā*. Most of these, *vijñāna* and *saṃjñā*, are classified among the five *skandha*s. They are, as such, empirical and impermanent and cannot be identified with any notion of a permanent or immortal soul. When it comes to *prajñā* (classified as *saṃskāra*), as we have seen, this is a synonym of what other schools call *buddhi*, *mati*, or *dhī*. It is instrumental in bringing about a knowledge of reality, *tattvajñāna*. The rare *parijñāna* seems to be used in much the same way (YṢ 6), and *ājñā* is one of the many canonical terms for the highest knowledge (SWTF, I, p.235).

In this context we must recall that, in the *ipsissima verba* of Nāgārjuna (*Ratnāvalī* 5.40), "In Mahāyāna there are, likewise, ten spiritual stages (*bhūmi*) of a bodhisattva." A summary of these stages, giving, as it were, the ideal CV of a bodhisattva, is provided (on the basis of the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*) in *Ratnāvalī* 5.41-60. We are here told how the bodhisattva gradually obtains various kinds of *jñāna*, etc., until, on the tenth stage he is a supreme great lord (*maheśvara*), a master of the sphere of *acintyajñāna* (*bsam yas ye śes*) (5.60). It is by gradually

collecting infinite *puṇya* and *jñāna* that a bodhisattva finally becomes a Buddha endowed with an extraordinary physical and spiritual body.

If we identify this inconceivable spiritual body with "soul", it would surely be wrong, in this sense, to claim that Madhyamaka denies its ultimate "existence".

II. Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka* (ed. and transl. Karen Lang, Copenhagen 1986). It goes without saying that in *nirvāṇa* there are neither *skandhas* nor *pudgala* (CŚ 9.21) -- this Nāgārjuna's clear opinion also (RĀ 1.41) -- nor, of course, is there any *caitanya* (9.22 ff.). Now, then, Āryadeva devotes an entire chapter -- the tenth -- to a critique of the various common notions held by Sāṃkhya, Vaiśeṣika (Nyāya) about the soul (*ātman*):
10.1-3. It is impossible to consider the internal self (*antarātman*) to be male, female or neuter, for how can the six elements on which any individual person is made, be male, etc.? Clearly, earth etc. are impersonal". -- The argument is an echo of *Śālistamba* § 26, and verbatim identical with: *na strī na pumān na napuṃsakam*. -- Assuming the ŚS to be the source, the next verse argues that a notion of a personal soul, ego, etc. is always based on a mere *samavāya* of six *dhātus* (§ 23), here *sarveṣu bhūteṣu* (2) or *anityesu bhāveṣu* (3), it is clear that there *is* no *ātman* here, and that, therefore, there is no real distinction to be made between yours and mine. That there is a *kalpanā* of an individual person, i.e. of the six elements "belonging" to me or you, is, of course, never denied. Only, it is "subjective", not "objective". The term *kalpanā* is here more or less a synonym of *ahaṃkāra* (e.g. RĀ 1.27 ff.). -- The self referred to by Āryadeva here in 3 would be the *puruṣapudgala* ref. to in the logion: *ṣaḍdhātur ayaṃ puruṣapudgala*... It was refused extensively by Nāgārjuna in RĀ 1.80-2.2.
10.4 Since the soul changes along with the body it cannot be entirely different from the body. Nor can it, when not different from the body, be permanent.
10.5. If, one the other hand, the *jīva* is assumed not to be in touch with the body, it cannot possibly be said to move the body.
10.6. If the soul, as *nitya*, cannot be harmed, there would be no reason to protect it (by virtuous actions etc.).
10.7. The fact that past events are remembered even now does not prove that the soul is *nitya*. A scar incurred in the past does not prove the present body to be permanent.
10.8. The fact that the self sometimes seems to be conscious, does not prove that it *is* consciousness. As the *puruṣa* (of Sāṃkhya) only *has* consciousness, it cannot be permanent (as consciousness itself is supposed to be -- though wrongly).

10.9. Again, if the *jīva* is supposed to have pleasure etc., it must be as impermanent as pleasure and other similar qualities.
10.10-12. Against Sāṃkhya: No such thing as a permanent consciousness (*caitanya*) that the "soul" either could be or could have. If consciousness were permanent it would need no sense organ (*karaṇa*) as an instrument to be conscious of something. Consciousness cannot be permanent if it changes along with the soul (*puruṣa*). If it does not change there must be some (permanent) element of consciousness (beyond consciousness) when the soul actually changes. This is absurd.
10.13. It seems impossible to hold (with Vaiśeṣika) that consciousness, located in mind, is small, whereas the soul (*ātman*) is said to be big. This would mean that a great part of the soul had no consciousness!
10.14. If the soul is omnipresent (*sarvagata*) how can it be limited -- as it actually seems to be?
10.15-16. Against Sāṃkhya: Absurd to claim that the unconscious *guṇa*s are active while the soul is merely a passive spectator.
10.17. If the soul, as held by the opponent, is active permanent and omnipresent, it must be inactive.
10.18. No agreement among opponents how big the soul is. A man of wisdom (*prajñā*) does not believe in its existence at all.
10.19. *If* the soul were permanent it could not suffer harm. If it cannot suffer harm, it would be absurd to strive for its freedom from harm (and suffering) !
10.20-21. Moreover, if it really exists, there can be no change. It will never attain liberation. If it does, a change must have taken place. Liberation, in other words, is only possible for a soul that neither exists nor does not exist.
10.22-25. The development from bondage to liberation can only be accounted for in terms of continuous evolution, like that of the seed producing a sprout. Thus the extremes of *uccheda* and *śāśvata* are avoided. -- The final argument, like the initial verses, based on *Śālistambasūtra*.

To sum up. Early Indian Madhyamaka offers a philosophical path to spiritual liberation, as do all other classical *darśana*s. Liberation, *mokṣa*, is to be found in emptiness, in *nirvāṇa*, in *tattvajñāna*, etc. Liberation, therefore, cannot be conceived without the reality of *jñāna*.

Does this imply that "everything is mind-only"? Can one speak of cognition without an object, or without a substance? These, and numerous related questions were taken up by subsequent Mahāyāna philosophers. The long debate between Madhyamaka and Yogācāra largely had to do with the ontological status of *(vi)jñāna*. For a more detailed attempt to survey this

interesting debate I may refer to my paper on *cittamātra* in *WZKS*, 41, 1997, pp. 159-206.

III. Like Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva, Bhavya devotes an entire chapter of his main work, the *Madhyamakahṛdaya*, to a refutation of the soul as maintained by Vedānta. Elsewhere, including his *Prajñāpradīpa* 18, he repeatedly rejects the Sāṃkhya and Vaiśeṣika notions of the soul.

Closely related to the notion of the soul, or rather: the highest soul, is the notion of Īśvara, or God. The idea of God as creator of the manifold world was never acceptable to the Buddhists. God could only be accepted as a circumlocution of karma, just as *ātman* could be understood as a *paryāya*, or synonym of *vijñāna*. The Buddhists are modern in the sense that they reject creation, and accept evolution. They clearly realized that man, not God, was to be held solely responsible for man's own actions.

If the concept of creation is to make any sense, it implies that there must be someone who creates, and someone, or something, that is somehow created. There must, more precisely, be an agent, an instrument, and an object.

First, then, the agent as agent (MHK 3.215-223, translated in my *Mahāyāna. Den senere indiske buddhisme*, pp.155-156). If God only creates happiness for a limited group he is obviously not an almighty God. If God is without cause and birth he cannot create anything, for in that case he is simply unreal. He cannot create the whole world merely by intending to do so, with his mind or will, for then a cowherd, merely by his intention, could also do so. God cannot be One, as creator, for obviously any creation depends on *many* causes and conditions. If God on the other hand is born (not unborn), what, then is his relation to the senses etc.? Do the senses have God, or does God have the senses? Surely, God does not create his own senses, nor do the senses create God. If God, as a creator, has a body with senses etc. he must himself be created, and, as such, be impermanent. Having a body he cannot be permanent. So, neither as unborn nor as born can God be considered to be a creator. An agent is neither unborn nor born.

Nor can one reasonably claim that anything has been created (MHK 9.95-113) by God. The soul, for instance, if unborn, cannot have been created by God. Nor can good and bad actions, for actions always belong to someone. Our bodies are due to karma, they are never created by God. Even God depends on karma. If God is pure spirit, why is the entire world created by him not pure spirit also? How can the effect be so different from its cause? Again, if God depends on karma, and e.g. is the cause of suffering, will he not, as a result, be burned in hell? If God is One, how come his creation be many? If God is

permanent, how come his creation is impermanent? If God is responsible for everything, why is he so unfair and unjust? Why does he create some people happy, others unhappy? Surely, God has created nothing.

There are just some of the arguments employed by Bhavya to refute the notion of God as Creator. Man is responsible for his own actions.

To sum up. Madhyamaka accepts the fact of evolution, the universal law of karmic causality. Continuity is a fact that leaves no room for an permanent or impermanent soul or God. Reality is to be found in the Middle, empty of extremes. Happiness is to be found in the gnosis of Reality, beyond *sat* and *asat*. This is bliss and immortality. The meaning of life is to get rid of the innate ignorance that causes us to be reborn. Man must ennoble himself as a spiritual being so as to become a *mahātman*, a *puruṣottama*, a *mahāsattva*, a *nātha*, a *buddha*, etc. In this sense one can undoubtedly speak of the magnanimity of Madhyamaka -- even if no soul exists, or does not not exist.

Literature

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Additional notice:
My reference to the words of "Jesus" about eternal life and knowledge in no way implies that I believe in the validity of any of the NT Gospel as hystorically trustworthy documents. On the contrary, there are good reasons to maintain that the NT Gospels are pseudepigraphies to a large extent based on the Buddhist canonical literature. I have discussed this issue in my recent book *Hīnayāna*.

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BEYOND SELF AND NOT-SELF:
The Mahayana Vision of Multidimensional Being

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When Professor Bart Dessein wrote to me to inquire whether I would be willing to contribute a paper to the special volume on the concept of the self in Buddhism, I was immediately attracted to the idea. Not because an extensive literature produced by competent scholars on the subject is not already extant, but because over the course of a quarter century of teaching Buddhism in Asia and in the West, the question of the self has consistently presented more difficulties to my students than almost any other aspect of Buddhist teaching. Perhaps this experience, in my case, has been accentuated by the fact that I have been primarily if not exclusively engaged in teaching practitioners or potential practitioners of Buddhism with a "personal" interest in the subject and not students merely fulfilling an eastern religions requirement as part of a degree course or even research scholars aspiring to a career in Buddhist studies. If the forgoing in itself had not been sufficient to whet my interest in the Buddhist conception of the self, I have also found that my most enthusiastic students, or should I say interlocutors, have been practicing psychiatrists and psychotherapists who naturally have a very keen interest in what the Buddhist tradition has to say about the self, self development and self transcendence.

I have already referred in passing to the extensive literature produced by modern scholars that already exists on the subject of the self in Buddhism. At the risk of appearing condescending, I cannot help but remark that much of it reminds me of the old parable of the blind men presented with an elephant. In as much as the metaphor of blindness is an ambivalent one in religious literature, I may perhaps be forgiven for introducing it here. Indeed, I hardly think it necessary to present at length the ample historical evidence that exists of what I may with greater discretion call the selective perception, or prejudiced interpretation of the Buddhist conception of the self. Professor Caroline Rhys Davids' valiant attempts to turn the Buddha into an advocate of an Upanishadic style self are well known and were exposed years ago by Professor Murti in his still excellent if somewhat outdated book.[1] But there have been equally determined efforts to expunge the concept of personality altogether from the Buddhist tradition. In all fairness, it has to be admitted that modern scholars have not been the only victims of this partial interpretation of Buddhist texts and teaching, but that even some Buddhist scholastics and schools have succumbed to the affliction.

Nonetheless, throughout the ages, recognized and respected exponents of the Buddhist tradition from the Buddha to the present day have regularly employed the conceptions of "self", "not-self" and related concepts without hesitation or fear of contradiction. Certainly an explanation of this practice consistent with Buddhist premises and principles must exist. Otherwise the conclusion would be inescapable that the authoritative representatives of the Buddhist tradition are philosophically naive or doctrinally inconsistent which is scarcely plausible.

In looking for an acceptable explanation of the actual use of the concepts of self, not-self and the rest within the Buddhist tradition, we ought perhaps to begin by recognizing the nature of the Indian philosophical tradition in general. While it has become a common place to emphasize the soteriological concerns of Indian philosophical systems in contrast to the main corpus of European philosophy which was almost exclusively descriptive and where soteriology was left to the churches, it may not be amiss if we recollect this fact at the outset of our investigation. The Buddha and Buddhism as part of the greater Indian philosophical tradition had soteriological concerns, and we may even assume that these soteriological concerns were primary while any descriptive contents found in the tradition were of secondary importance only.

The presence of a primary concern with soteriology however does not by itself preclude varying degrees of dogmatism from the mildest to the most extreme forms. The historical manifestations of the Semitic religions supply the most obvious evidence of this fact, but the Indian philosophical and religious tradition was also not wholly unaffected by the disease of dogmatism. What distinguishes the Buddha and Buddhism from other Indian philosophical and religious traditions with which it may share a common soteriological concern is that for Buddhism, the foundation of the path to salvation was experiment and not revelation and the paradigm chosen to represent the authority along the way was the physician and not the priest. Indeed, it is well known that one of the most popular epithets of the Buddha was "The King of Physicians" and that the Buddha is represented in the guise of the master physician at innumerable places in the body of Buddhist canonical literature of which the sixteenth chapter of the *Saddharmapundarika-Sutra* is only one example that comes immediately to mind. The compelling parallel apparent between the ancient fourfold therapeutic formula of disease, diagnosis cure and treatment and the Four Noble Truths has also rightly been remarked upon by modern commentators. The Buddhist tradition wherein the Buddha and more generally the Buddhist preceptor is regarded as the physician and the Dharma or teaching is regarded as the medicine, course of treatment or therapy compounded to cure the disease of suffering has been

sustained throughout Buddhist literature by many esteemed authors and is maintained even today by Buddhist preceptors who represent authentic Buddhist lineages.

The mark of the master physician or therapist who relies upon the experimental method is surely flexibility and adaptability. It is incumbent upon such a skilled therapist to take into account the various conditions of his patients: physical, mental, social, financial, and to formulate a course of treatment likely to be efficacious in each particular case. Obviously, this approach entails the liberal and unfettered use of a wide variety of palliatives and antidotes, commensurate with the special circumstances and afflictions of his clients. In practice, such a pragmatic approach requires a considerable degree of disengagement or detachment from any particular theoretical or dogmatic position. The Buddha himself emphatically rejected all theories and dogmas from the very beginning, and this attitude has been the distinguishing characteristic of the Buddhist approach to the fundamental problems of conscious existence. It is therefore hardly surprising if we find within the body of Buddhist teaching free and frequent references to the self, to not-self and to other modes of being, supra mundane and multi-dimensional. The issue is not to choose which among these is the real or absolute Buddhist view of the self, but rather to incorporate them into a complete and comprehensive vision of the Buddhist soteriological pharmacopoeia. It may be interesting to note in concluding this reflection upon the general nature of the Buddhist attitude toward theoretical constructs and therapeutic praxis to remark that modern psychiatrists and psychotherapists, not withstanding their personal inclinations to and or professional training in Psychoanalysis, Behaviorism, Gestalt and the like regularly make use of an ad hoc combination of methods taken from more than one psycho-therapeutic tradition in treating their patients.

Many, if not all, of the elements characteristic of Shantarakshita's treatment of the question of the self are anticipated in the earlier Buddhist tradition, beginning with the dialogues of the Buddha. This is hardly surprising in as much as Shantarakshita enjoyed an unique historical position within the Buddhist tradition, standing as he did at what I may venture to call the apex of Buddhist philosophy in India. Indeed, it seems to me that Shantarakshita's importance as perhaps the most representative exponent of the fully developed Indian Mahayana tradition has largely been neglected. Notwithstanding his comprehensive vision and encyclopedic knowledge of the tenets of Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophical schools, his special contribution has generally been undervalued as a consequence of the fact that he has been seen merely as a synthesizer, rather

than as an innovator. Moreover, the genius of his system has been diminished by the application to it of that rather pejorative adjective, "syncretic" which is completely unjustified. The term "syncretic" implies an arbitrary and uncritical combination of diverse and even contradictory elements. On the contrary, Shantarakshita's system is supremely reasonable and acutely critical. He has, I believe, a real claim to represent the authentic expression of the Indian Mahayana Buddhist tradition and to be the genuine heir to the Buddha, Nagarjuna, Asanga and Vasubandhu.

Another point all too often made against Shantarakshita's right to represent the authentic voice of the Indian Mahayana philosophical tradition is his advocacy of the Svatantrika view in the area of Madhyamaka exposition. What such critics of Shantarakshita tend to overlook is that the predilection towards the Prasangika approach to Madhyamaka forensic methodology is largely the result of the fact that modern scholars almost invariably view the Madhyamaka through the interpretative spectacles of the Tibetan tradition, and particularly those of Tsong Khapa and the Geluk pa school, where the Svatantrika view was disparaged and the Prasangika view was lauded and accepted as the orthodox one. It is by no means clear that the Prasangika view enjoyed such unchallenged supremacy in India, and there are no valid grounds for regarding Nagarjuna as a Prasangika in as much as both Prasangika and Svatantrika arguments are found in germinal form in his works. In sum, I would like to suggest that Shantarakshita is a dependable and worthy exponent of the teaching of the Buddha in general and of the Mahayana tradition in particular and that his views regarding the self, not-self and self development and self transcendence are representative of the central current of Buddhist thought on the subject. This much will become clear in the course of our consideration of Shantarakshita's elucidation of the topic of the self and of some of the responses to the question that preceded him within the Buddhist tradition.

It is a curious but irrefutable fact that virtually all discussions of the really fundamental issues in Buddhist thought inevitably have to first address the matter of the fourteen so called inexpressibles. This is also the case in regard to the question of the self in Buddhism. Indeed, as anyone with more than a cursory knowledge of the teaching of the Buddha is aware, the final two of the fourteen questions, or more accurately propositions, to which the Buddha refused to ascent refer directly to the self or personality. The alternatives proposed, as we may recall, are that the living being, *jiva* or self is: 1.- identical with the body or the empirical organism with its psycho-physical components, or that: 2.- the living being or self is different from the latter. The Buddha consistently refused

to adopt either of these alternatives. Without doubt the Buddha's refusal to admit either the identity of the self or personality with the empirical individual or to admit that it was different, disassociated and presumably transcendental is extremely important for an understanding of the Buddhist view of the self, coming as it does from the very founder of the tradition and having unquestionable authority.

But what precisely is the significance of the Buddha's reticence in this particular case, effecting as it does the self or personality, the very foundation and instrument of the soteriological quest. One of the best and most revealing suggestions of what the Buddha had in mind is to be found in His remarks to His faithful attendant Ananda following one of His several encounters with the wanderer Vacchagotta who persistently questioned the Buddha with regard to the fourteen propositions, including the status of the self. The Buddha's explanation of His silence given to Ananda is worth reproducing in substance here because it supplies much of the fundamental conceptual material which will later go into the formulation of a developed and elaborate system of Buddhist psychology that avoids the fatal flaws of dogmatic positions regarding the nature of the self. The Buddha tells Ananda that, if when asked by the Wanderer Vacchagotta, "Is there a self?" He had replied to him that there is a self, then that would have meant siding with those Recluses and Brahmins who are eternalists. But, on the other hand, if when asked, "Is there not a Self?" he had replied that it does not exist, that would have meant siding with those Recluces and Brahmins who are annihilationists. Moreover the Buddha asks Ananda whether if when asked by Vacchagotta "Is there a self?" he had replied that there is, would such an answer have been in accord with the knowledge that all things are impermanent? Ananda answers that it would surely not have been in accord with such knowledge. But the Buddha goes on. He tells Ananda that if when asked by Vacchagotta "Is there not a self?" He had answered that there is not, it would have meant more biwilderment for the already bewildered Vacchagotta. The latter would have said to himself, "formerly, indeed I had a self, but now I have not got one anymore."

The obviously biwildered Vacchagotta is baffled by the Buddha's silence, His refusal to conform to the common practices of His contemporaries, the Recluces and Brahmins who wandered the Middle Country, pervaying their philosophical and religious wares. Vacchagotta asks the Buddha whether He does not have any theory of His own. The Lord answers, "The Tathagata, oh Vaccha, is free from all opinions, but this, Vaccha, does the Tathagata know, the nature of form and how form arises and how form perishes. Therefore, the Tathagata has attained deliverance and is free from attachment in as much as all imaginings or

agitations or false notions concerning an ego or anything pertaining to an ego have perished, have faded away, have ceased, have been given up and are relinquished."[2]

The forgoing considerations already supply several of the key elements which will figure prominently in the treatment of the question of the self within the later Buddhist tradition. Firstly, in the formulation of the problem of the nature of the self found in the fourteen inexpressibles, there is immediately evident a characteristic form of analysis in terms of identity and difference. This form of analysis will remain central to the examination of the question of the self by eminent Buddhist masters like Nagarjuna and Shantarakshita. Moreover this form of analysis will be extended to all phenomena by both of them. While analysis in terms of identity and difference, or unity and plurality is sometimes reckoned to be a special mark of the approach of Shantarakshita and the later Svatantrikas, and indeed extensive use of the formula is made by them, it also appears at a number of crucial places in the opus of Nagarjuna. In addition, we find in the Buddha's explanation of His silence to Ananda, significant references to the alternatives or extremes of eternalism and nihilism. The latter two views which may also be expressed by a number of related terms like permanence and annihilation and the like are regarded as the direct consequence of the affirmation of either of the alternatives presented in the last two of the fourteen questions. Both, as we know, are inimical to religious life and the successful pursuit of the soteriological goal, and both play a prominent role in the treatment of the question of the self by Nagarjuna and Shantarakshita. Lastly, and importantly, we have presented in opposition to the trenchant critique of the alternatives indicated in the last of the fourteen propositions, the conception of conditionality, or conditioned reality. "This ... does the Tathagata know, the nature of form and how form arises and how form perishes." We can add to form the other psychophysical aggregates: feeling, perception, volition and consciousness, and so here in germinal form we have the entire formula of Interdependent Origination which virtually all Buddhists agree is the real heart of the teaching of the Buddha and which Nagarjuna and Shantarakshita never tire of extolling.

While the Buddha's encounter with Vacchagotta and His subsequent remarks to Ananda may be taken as representative of the Buddha's final attitude towards the question of the self, the Pali texts also contain numerous instances of the circumstantial affirmation of both self and not-self. The familiar couplets from the *Dhammapada*, "The self is the master of the self; who would be the master of another? The wise man attains heaven through mastery of the self." "The self is the master of the self, who would be the master of another? The self is the witness of good conduct and bad." may suffice in the interest of brevity as

an example of the former. As for the latter position, the affirmation of not-self, instances are far too numerous to mention. Statements like "The body is not the self..." occur with regularity, and it can hardly be regarded as coincidental that tradition holds that the second of all the discourses delivered by the Buddha to the five ascetics at the deer park in Sarnath was the Discourse on the characteristic of not-self, *Anattalakkhana-sutta*. Even the Pali Abhidharmic tradition explicitly recognizes the existence of the two standpoints: self and not-self, when it distinguishes the Abhidharmic content of the discourses from the Sutric content by saying that when the Buddha spoke in terms of "I" and "mine" and uttered phrases like, "I myself shall go to Uruvela..." it was representative of the conventional, *vohara* point of view, while when He spoke in terms of the elements it was representative of the ultimate, *paramattha* point of view. While this explanation obviously reflects the particular interpretation of the ultimate truth advocated by the Pali Abhidharmic tradition, it is nonetheless significant insofar as it supplies additional evidence of the fact that both the teaching of self and not-self were from the earliest period in the history of Buddhism regarded as authentic.

Finally, it is imperative to remember that notwithstanding the abundant refutations of the self and the personality found in the Pali texts and the virulent polemics directed against the idea of the person, *pudgala* in the later exegetical tradition of which the sustained attack on the Vatsiputriyas or Pudgalavadins is the best known example, the Buddhist tradition concurrently maintained and propagated an ideal of religious life that included various classes of Noble or Holy Persons, *Arya-pudgala*. Indeed, the four types of Holy Persons: the Stream-winner, the Once-returner, the Never-returner and the Arhat were constantly held up to those aspiring to the highest attainments afforded by Buddhist practice as the personal embodiments of those exalted goals, and there does not appear to have been the slightest consternation caused by the unabashed use of this otherwise abhorrent term in describing the very paragons of Buddhist virtue. All of the above is certainly important for a correct understanding of the attitude towards the conceptions of self, not-self and supra mundane psycho-physical existence at the time of the Buddha and during the first few centuries of the Buddhist tradition. In the following pages, I shall attempt to show how this attitude was articulated, first in the formative period of the Mahayana, and then in the fully developed Mahayana as represented in the thought of Shantarakshita.

The characteristic marks of the Buddhist treatment of the question of the self found in the early Buddhist tradition manifest themselves again in the period of the formative Mahayana. Nagarjuna, for example, wrote a short but very impor-

tant treatise, along with a commentary, the *Pratityasamutpadahridaya*. As its very title indicates, the text is concerned with an elementary exposition of the central teaching of Interdependent Origination. Nonetheless, an examination of the contents of the work reveals that virtually all the salient features of the Buddha's own attitude towards the question of the self, as evident in His encounter with Vacchagotta and His subsequent remarks to Ananda, are addressed.

The living being who transmigrates through samsara and the empirical psycho-physical personality are neither identical nor different. "Whether the mind at the point of death and the mind which belongs to the subsequent birth are identical or different," Nagarjuna writes, "is inexpressible."[3] Moreover, the abnegation of identity and difference is, just as in the Buddha's case, prompted by the need to avoid the alternatives of eternalism and nihilism. Nagarjuna writes, "at the moment of death, the mind does not transmigrate to the subsequent existence, because the error of permanence would follow, nor does the subsequent existence originate from any other source, because the error of being without a cause would follow."[4]

Again, following in the footsteps of the Buddha, Nagarjuna opposes the conception of conditionality to the dogmas of identity and difference, eternalism and nihilism. He cites a list of seven examples which illustrate Interdependent Origination. The list begins with the example of oral instruction and goes on to include the perennial example of the seed as well as other examples like that of sound and the like.[5] The example of the seed was of course employed by the Buddha in the *Shalistamba-sutra*, and we shall see Shantarakshita use it too.

Although the parallels apparent between Nagarjuna's views as they are expressed in the *Pratityasamutpadahridaya* and the attitude of the Buddha as we observed it in the exchanges with Vacchagotta and Ananda are striking, there is still more of interest in this short but pregnant text of the Madhyamaka master. Not that what Nagarjuna has to add to his treatment of the self, the world and Interdependent Origination is new or foreign to the teaching of the Buddha or to the earlier Buddhist tradition, but its appearance here presages the synthetic vision of the later Mahayana tradition. Indeed, Nagarjuna suggests in the *Pratityasamutpadahridaya* that it is consciousness and conscious activity that is responsible for the appearance of the self and the world. He writes, "excluding superimposition, *samaropana* there is no sentient being."[6] He is even more categorical when he declares unequivocally, "The wheel of becoming is produced by the propensity, *vasana* for erroneous conceptualization, *vikalpa*."[7] Nagarjuna similarly ascribes the origin of afflictions and karma responsible for the world of cyclical existence to conceptualization in the *Mulamadhyamakakarika*.[8]

The device of critical analysis of phenomena in terms of identity and difference which we saw appear first applied to the self in the final two of the fourteen propositions to which the Buddha refused to ascent became increasingly popular and came to be applied more generally to all entities as the Buddhist analytical tradition grew in breadth and strength. The alternatives may be translated and interpreted in various ways: oneness and maniness, unity and plurality and so on, but the essential meaning remains constant. The interesting point to be made is that this analytical formula which came to be regarded as characteristic of Shantarakshita and the Svatantrika-Madhyamakas was actually employed not infrequently by Nagarjuna also and at very significant points in His opus. Certainly, it has to be regarded as significant that Nagarjuna includes the two: identity and difference, among the eight negations predicated of the real in the benedictory stanza of his chief work, the *Mulamadhyamakakarika*. Again in the eighteenth chapter of the same text dealing with the self, Nagarjuna begins by replicating the Buddha's analysis of the question.[9] He examines the self and the aggregates in terms of identity and difference. But the analysis may be extended to all phenomena. Later in the same chapter, Nagarjuna explains that whatever exists dependent upon something is not that thing, nor is it different. Therefore, it neither perishes nor endures. The real state of things is beyond identity and difference and beyond permanence and annihilation.[10] The alternatives also appear in the *Shunyatasaptati* where Nagarjuna writes, "Without one, many does not occur; without many, one does not occur; therefore, Interdependently Originated entities are devoid of signs."[11] And in the following stanza, "The twelve constituents of Interdependent Origination do not originate since they are not justified in one moment of consciousness nor in a series of moments."[12] Again in speaking of the compounded and uncompounded factors of existence advocated by the schools of Buddhist realists, Nagarjuna writes, "All factors of existence are neither one nor many."[13]

The master of the Madhyamaka philosophy also directly addresses the issue of the self at several places in his various works. In the *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, he says that the Buddhas taught self; they also taught not-self, but for those whose mental maturity is most fully developed, they taught neither self nor not-self.[14] In the *Shunyatasaptati*, he writes, "There is not anything corresponding to the expressions: not-self, not not-self, and both self and not-self, because all factors are, like Nirvana, in their intrinsic being empty."[15] The reason for this multivalent approach is clear. The teaching of the Buddha is designed to suit the needs of particular people with different levels of aptitude and diverse capacities. Therefore, anything may be real at one point, not real at another, and neither real nor not real at still another point in one's progress along

the path to freedom.[16] The Buddha's statements according to which things are said to exist, not exist, both exist and not exist, are instances of His intentional or meditated speech, that is to say, speech calculated to fit the requirements of disciples with various dispositions.[17] Indeed, Chandrakirti supplies a detailed explanation of The Buddha's diverse utterances in regard to the self in his commentary to Nagarjuna's *Mulamadhyamakakarika*. Essentially, he says that the Buddha taught the reality of the self to those with materialist and nihilist inclinations, while He taught the doctrine of not-self to those with eternalist tendencies. To those well advanced on the way to Enlightenment, He taught neither self nor not-self.[18]

Notwithstanding Nagarjuna's well deserved fame as a critical philosopher and polemicist, he was also a heartfelt exponent of the Mahayana Buddhist way to beatitude. Anyone who has made a serious study of Nagarjuna's two letters: the *Suhrillekha* and the *Ratnavali* as well as the four laudatory works, *Chatuhstava*, cannot help but realize this truth. Indeed, Professor C. Lindtner who has made a thorough study of all of those works of Nagarjuna that are generally accepted to be authentic has suggested with regard to the *Ratnavali* that the real subject matter of this work is the accomplishment of the two accumulations of merit and knowledge *punya-jnana-sambhara*.[19] If this is indeed the case, and I concur with Professor Lindtner that it is, then Nagarjuna has to be assumed to have had in mind a vision of the Buddhist perfected person, the advanced Bodhisattva, in short, the Mahayana equivalent of the four classes of noble or holy persons extolled in the earlier Buddhist tradition.

In fact at no fewer than four places in the *Yuktishashtika*, Nagarjuna refers directly to such a figure. He writes, "The Great Persons are freed through the complete understanding (of the relativity) of existence and non-existence."[20] Again, "the Great Persons have no position and no argument; How could those who have no position have a counter position?"[21] Further, he declares, "The Great persons who see entities through the eye of knowledge as similar to a reflection do not become entangled in objects."[22] Finally, "The Great Persons who do not rely upon an objective support have neither attachment nor freedom from attachment."[23] What is perhaps most remarkable about the passages cited above is that while I have chosen to render the Tibetan term that occurs in the text "Great Persons" the ostensible Sanskrit equivalent would presumably be, *mahatman*. Professor Lindtner justly gives it as such, but chooses to render it "the magnanimous" and "the magnanimous ones" in the first two instances of its occurrence and "the great souls" on the occasion of its two later occurrences.[24] If any further proof of Nagarjuna's dedication to the Mahayana ideal of sainthood were needed, the final stanza of the text wherein he specifically invokes

the conceptions of the accumulations of merit and knowledge and the phenomenal and transcendental dimensions of enlightened being that result from the former should be sufficient to clinch the case.[25] Although we have not quite finished with Nagarjuna, I shall, for the most part, leave the selection of a few additional quotations from his works to Shantarakshita who makes liberal use of them in his commentary to the *Madhyamakalankara*.

The brothers Asanga and Vasubandhu also, notwithstanding their consistent critique of the concept of the self, frequently allude in their works to the prerequisites for the attainment of a supra mundane personality, the Mahayana goals of exalted Bodhisattvahood or Buddhahood. In the *Madhyantavibhaga* and its commentary, Asanga and Vasubandhu prescribe the accomplishment of the two immaculate accumulations of merit and knowledge for the ultimate attainment of Buddhahood. The accomplishment of the former leads, they say, to the acquisition of the particular marks of a Buddha.[26] In his shorter independent works too, Vasubandhu does not fail to remind his readers of the distinction between the mundane and the supra mundane personality. He says, for instance, that the nature fabricated by fools with its subject-object duality is the target of the teaching of not-self or impersonality. The latter is not directed to the ineffable self that is the province of the Buddhas.[27] Moreover, Knowledge of the minds of others and the like is the result of the supra mundane personality of the Enlightened Ones. It is beyond subject and object.[28] Vasubandhu also proclaims the exalted goal of the Mahayana path. He declares that the apprehension of reality is coincidental with the attainment of psychic mastery. Such progress is accompanied by the accomplishment of the twofold beneficial objectives and the three dimensions: terrestrial, celestial and transcendental, of Buddhahood.[29] Consequently, it is clear that in the literature of the formative period of Mahayana philosophy exemplified in the works of authors like Nagarjuna, Asanga and Vasubandhu, there is an emerging picture of a supra mundane and exalted personality, that of the advanced Bodhisattva or Buddha which is the goal of practice.

Of the school of Shantarakshita, Professor D. S. Ruegg writes "On their side, the Yogachara-svatantrika-Madhyamaka appear to have continued earlier trends of thought when they undertook to compliment the Madhyamaka theory of the pure *paramartha* both with a system of metaphysics, epistemology and logic providing an elaborated philosophical construction and analysis of *samvriti* and with a system of ethico-spiritual praxis."[30] The forgoing statement applies nicely to the whole of Shantarakshita's *Madhyamakalankara* where not only is the full force of the author's critical faculties brought to bear upon a wide variety of

rival systems, but where his logical acumen and minute analysis of phenomenal reality are also amply demonstrated. For my purposes in this essay however I shall concentrate upon the later portions of Shantarakshita's text. Therein, the "system of ethico-spiritual praxis" to which Professor Ruegg refers is most in evidence, and notwithstanding the presence of some residual critical elements, the author's presentation of the Mahayana Buddhist vision tends to be more didactic and declamatory than in other works belonging to related literary genre. The value of such a presentation of the essential elements of Mahayana Buddhist praxis should not be underestimated, because here as in the *Ratnavali* of Nagarjuna, we are given a clear idea of the path to be pursued by the aspiring Bodhisattva, but in this case from the vantage point of the apex of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy in India in the eighth century.

Shantarakshita commences his presentation of the positive contents of his system by drawing our attention to the fundamental truth of the conditional origination of entities. This is another indication of the importance which he accords to the teaching of Interdependent Origination.[31] In keeping with this view, the first moment of the present life, can be justly inferred to originate from the pre-existence of habitual erroneous propensities. Moreover, the nature of the present life will be conditioned by and commensurate with the character of the habitual propensities which existed formerly. Thus, persons are born with lesser, middling and greater capacities. The conception of the existence of entities and the consequent development of potential forms of being occurs from beginningless time. Therefore, the occurrence of future lives can also be inferred. At the point of death if the mind is not free from the propensity for attachment to the conceptions of "I" and "Mine," it will result in the arising of the mind belonging to the future or subsequent life. The consciousness belonging to the subsequent life will conform to and be conditioned by the character of the consciousness belonging to the previous existence, as in the case of the previous intention to lie down and the like.[32] The forgoing is a timely reminder that notwithstanding the calculated emphasis placed upon the doctrine of not-self, in the context of common Buddhist religious practice, rebirth and the existence of personal responsibility is a plainly accepted fact.

Rebirth, therefore is conditioned by an innumerable series of previous existences. It is an instance in a continuity, and consequently, the alternatives of eternalism and nihilism do not apply to the doctrine taught in this text. Like the Buddha and Nagarjuna before him, Shantarakshita is determined to demonstrate that his teaching avoids the logically untenable and soteriologically sterile extremes of permanence and annihilation. Again like the Buddha and Nagarjuna, Shantarakshita uses the example of the seed, the sprout and so on to illustrate the

Buddhist conception of continuity. The extinction of a previous moment of being is followed by the origination of a subsequent moment, but no permanent entity endures, each moment being subject to instantaneous destruction. Conditioned phenomena have neither beginning nor end. As Nagarjuna says in the *Shunyatasaptati* "If an entity were existent, it would mean permanence; if non-existent, it would mean annihilation; if (an entity) were existent, it would mean both (permanence and annihilation), therefore an entity is not admitted."[33] Consequently, Shantarakshita insists, the continuity evident in the example of the seed and so forth and present in the case of rebirth does not depend upon an entity for its operation.[34] What it does depend upon is consciousness, as even Nagarjuna suggested in the *Pratityasamutpadahridaya* and as Shantarakshita himself will make clear in due course.

The Bodhisattva who follows the Mahayana path and is adroit in the practice of the insubstantiality, *nihsvabhava* of factors understands that from the ultimate point of view, the practitioner, the practice and the path are all non-existent. Moreover, he does not apprehend the origination of form and the other aggregates. Nor does he apprehend their cessation. All of this is extensively demonstrated in fundamental Mahayana texts like the *Samadhiraja-Sutra* and in the *Prajnaparamita* Sutras. The attainment of liberation is made easy, in Shantarakshita's system, by familiarity with emptiness, because belief in the real existence of entities is the fundamental cause of the origination of the whole complex of afflictions *samklesha*. As Nagarjuna writes in the *Yuktishashtika*, "If one accepts (the existence) of entities, the awful erroneous views will arise; From them lust and ill-will originate (and) from the latter, disputation will arise."[35]

Belief in the real existence of entities is therefore the cause of all views and afflictions. Views and afflictions are removed by eliminating attachment to the real existence of entities, and the latter is achieved by means of the understanding of Interdependent Origination. When the meaning of Interdependent Origination is understood, the twelve constituents of cyclical existence from ignorance to old age and death and the whole complex of afflictions are apprehended to be, in reality, unoriginated.[36]

At this point, Shantarakshita is compelled to respond to the objections of those Buddhists with a realistic turn of mind who argue that if in fact entities are non-existent, then the entire edifice of ethico-religious practice along with its fundamental assumptions will crumble. His answer is that the schema of the ethico-religious vision and the effective operation of the appropriate mechanisms of progressive soteriology are sustained not by the existence of entities, but rather by the power of consciousness and conscious derivatives. If the elements

of the ethico-religious system were indeed ultimately real or substantial, then it would have to be demonstrated that all these elements from the atom to consciousness were in their intrinsic being either one or many - unitary or plural. Essentially, this is a restatement of the argument with which Shantarakshita commences the present treatise.[37] In as much as all entities are inappropriate taken either as unitary or plural, they are in their intrinsic being empty.

The negation of the real being of all entities is undertaken from the ultimate point of view. It does not effect the phenomenal reality of factors of experience. Again Shantarakshita turns to the master Nagarjuna for confirmation of his view. He cites three stanzas from the *Yuktishashtika*. "Those who do not understand the meaning of vacuity (emptiness) grasp only the verbal (or superficial) import. Such lesser persons who do not accomplish merit are ruined." Again, "It has been explained that the effects of actions are certainly not lost and that there are six realms of sentient beings. The thorough understanding of the nature and non-origination of these has also been demonstrated." Finally, "Intentionally, the Conquerors explained "I" and "mine"; similarly, the aggregates, elements and sense-spheres were also proclaimed."[38]

The ground and goal of the ethico-religious path, the complex of afflictions and purification, *vyavadana* were taught from the phenomenal point of view, taking into consideration the perspective of common people who inhabit the everyday world. Interdependently originated entities, so long as they are not examined, are enthralling like the perception of water in a mirage. However, they cannot withstand examination, because when subjected to analysis, they are all found to be similar to a reflection. Ultimately, all such entities are unoriginated and empty. The Buddhas taught the Dharma relying upon the two truths.[39] With the two truths, phenomenal and ultimate in mind, the complex of afflictions and purification as well as the accomplishment of the two immaculate accumulations of merit and knowledge were taught.

The Buddhas taught the phenomenal or conventional truth, notwithstanding its ultimate unreality, in conformity with the ways of the world. For example, notwithstanding the truth of not-self, the Buddhas spoke about the self and that pertaining to a self. Similarly, to cure attachment to the self, by skillful means, purposefully, they taught the doctrine of the aggregates.[40] With this last comment, Kamalashila confirms what some modern commentators have also believed to be the real purpose of the doctrine of elements.

Next Shantarakshita embarks upon a discussion of purity. Certainly the consideration of this topic is made necessary by the reference in the preceding stanza to the two immaculate or pure accumulations, and by the question of the practice of the perfections which it entails. The latter implies the concept of the

"three pure circles" which indeed is what makes them perfections. But, we would be mistaken if we assumed that the purity which concerns Shantarakshita has anything to do with the relative purity recognized by the conventions of the world. The purity which interests the author of this text is more closely akin to emptiness, and we shall find that it is virtually a synonym for insubstantiality.

In two stanzas, using the logical device of agreement and difference, Shantarakshita introduces the notion that pure effects arise from pure causes, while impure effects arise from impure causes. The examples he adduces are taken from the common stock of Buddhist ethics. Just as, he says, moral virtue originates from right view, and sexual misconduct originates from wrong view, so a pure effect originates from a pure cause, while an impure cause produces an impure effect. The key to understanding these passages is certainly the reference to the conception of right view which for Shantarakshita is none other than the view of insubstantiality or emptiness. Consequently, for him, when an understanding of insubstantiality or emptiness is present, the effects of actions are powerful and pure.[41]

From the ultimate point of view none of the entities with which common conduct and religious practice are concerned exist. The popular belief in their reality is just the consequence of attachment. Their ultimate existence is refuted by what Shantarakshita prefers to call valid instruments of cognition, *pramana*. This is an interesting choice of terminology, because it betrays the author's preoccupation with the conventions of logical usage. While Nagarjuna or any number of Shantarakshita's predecessors might well have said that the real existence of all entities is refuted by reason or analysis or examination, Shantarakshita prefers to use the logically loaded concept of valid instruments of cognition. What he really means however would hardly be accepted by any of his Nyaya opponents, because when he says that the ultimate existence of all entities is refuted by valid instruments of cognition, he means that they are not amenable to comprehension in terms of one or many - unity or plurality. Therefore what we actually have in this statement is a simple reiteration of The central argument of the whole text.

Ultimately, the conviction that all these objects commonly experienced in the world exist is erroneous. The apprehension of objects such as those involved in the practice of the perfection of generosity, the giver, the gift and the recipient, the elements of the three pure circles mentioned above, is refuted. Their apprehension is like the false cognition of the existence of water in a mirage.[42]

Shantarakshita goes on to insist that the practices of generosity and the like are of little value if they are done with attachment to the conceptions of "I" and Mine". All such practices, if they are done with the mistaken belief in the real

existence of entities, possess little power. They are like the practices of generosity and the like when they are performed by Buddhists and non-Buddhists who are attached to a substantialist view. Even meritorious practices done on the basis of the erroneous apprehension of the real existence of objects will not be conducive to supreme and perfect Enlightenment.[43]

On the contrary, however, such practices as generosity and the like, if they are done with an understanding of insubstantiality will bear great fruits. In as much as all entities are ultimately illogical and therefore not apprehended, practices performed with such knowledge originate from a great or perfect cause. The effect of such a great or perfect cause will be sound like the sprout that grows from a fresh seed. When generosity and other perfections are practiced with an understanding of insubstantiality, they are of great benefit because their cause is not erroneous. When a Bodhisattva practices generosity and the like through the three pure circles, with the understanding that all objects are similar to a reflection, then his practice is worthy of great faith, since it is based upon the absence of delusion. At this juncture, Shantarakshita supports his point with liberal and lengthy quotations from the *Prajnaparamita* Sutras.[44]

All phenomenal entities, including subject and object, that participate in the operation of cause and effect are products of consciousness and conscious derivatives. Objects that are assumed in the world to be self-existent are in reality of the nature of dream and illusion. Form and the like which are commonly thought to be external objects cannot in fact be established by the sense of vision and so forth.[45] The experience of external objects like the perception of a patch of blue and the like is similar to the experience of objects in a dream. Even Nagarjuna accedes to this point at several places, perhaps most notably in the *Yuktishashtika* where he says, "The primary elements etc. are included in consciousness."[46] Indeed, the existence of external objects has been extensively refuted in this and other texts by means of the refutation of the constructs of the atom and matter.

Nonetheless, if intelligent people examine consciousness in terms of one and many - unity and plurality, consciousness too is found to be ultimately unsustainable. Consciousness has no essence, and it also is regarded as ultimately insubstantial. All external objects have been shown to be non-existent, but according to the Madhyamaka analysis, self-origination is impossible, all phenomena being the products of interdependent origination. Consequently, independent existence being impossible, consciousness cannot exist without depending upon an object. And, in as much as objects have been shown to be unreal, consciousness too is unreal. Shantarakshita and his disciple and commentator agree that for both the Yogachara and the Madhyamaka systems, the intrinsic-being of

entities is inadmissible. Therefore, the non-existence of an object necessarily implies the non-existence of a subject as well. Practically, Kamalashila informs us, one should first meditate upon the conception that external objects are not existent, but that only mind exists. Thereafter one should meditate upon the consideration that ultimately, since objects are non-existent, so the subject consciousness too is non-existent and has to be abandoned. Thereupon one enters the meditation that is devoid of all representations - the real heart of the Mahayana vision.

Now should it be asked, "Who is the yogin who enters such a state?" it has to be said that from the ultimate point of view, there is no such yogin, no meditation and so forth. Nonetheless, from the phenomenal point of view, just as one might say, "Devadatta goes and the Like" so there exists such a yogin and such a meditation. This, Shantarakshita says, is the middle way free from the alternatives of one and many -unity and plurality. Referring to the *Lankavatara-Sutra*, he says, that the incomparable knowledge of the insubstantiality of all things renders the conduct of the Bodhisattva spontaneous and tranquil.[47]

In the concluding portions of the *Madhyamakalankara* and its commentaries, Shantarakshita and Kamalashila assume the complete role of propagandists for the Mahayana. Their vision of the supra mundane existence - the multidimensional form of being of the exalted Bodhisattvas and Buddhas - also begins to emerge. Notwithstanding a relatively detailed critique of the later Vedanta which is of considerable interest and which I hope to make the subject of another paper, the last few stanzas of this text supply an eloquent exposition of the Mahayana and its religious vision.

The two systems: the Yogachara and the Madhyamaka, between them constitute the Mahayana. The Yogachara's affirmation of the creative role of consciousness does not contradict the Madhyamaka's denial of intrinsic-being, because it refers to the phenomenal level. Besides, according to Shantarakshita, proponents of the Mahayana need not hesitate to employ logic or reason in the advancement of their view. This is an obvious allusion to Shantarakshita's championship of the Svatantrika position and its use of the independent syllogism *Svatantra-anumana* and the objective means of knowledge *vastu-bala-pravritti-pramana*.[48]

All the Tathagatas, Shantarakshita says, follow the way of the Mahayana wherein all entities are held to be devoid of self-existence. The Buddha's demonstration of the absence of intrinsic-being in all things distinguishes it from the doctrines of non-Buddhists that remain attached to the concepts of self and substance, and wherein there is at the most only the slightest inkling of emptiness. According to the Mahayana teaching, meditation on the vision of the real, that is

suchness *tathata* removes the afflictions which are adventitious. In this manner, the nature of reality is realized. It is luminous, and pure, but it is characterized by continuous instantaneous destruction, is evanescent and ever-changing, infinitely diverse and dynamic. The teaching of the Tathagata is free from all fabrications of thought, and is therefore attractive to those who aspire to the ultimate truth.

The Buddha demonstrated emptiness which is unknown to the doctrines of Buddhist realists and non-Buddhists in many diverse ways. It alone is true or right. As Nagarjuna said in the *Yuktishashtika*, "Whoever imputes origination to compounded factors does not in the least understand the movement of the wheel of Interdependent Origination." And, "Whatever originates dependent upon this and that does not originate in its own-being. How can what is not originated in its own-being be said to originate?"[49] We might be tempted to add, "The Conquerors proclaimed that Nirvana is the only truth, therefore, who among the wise could comprehend the rest not to be false?"[50]

The teaching of the Buddha is characterized by the proclamation of the insubstantiality of the person and of factors. This is the constantly enduring nectar of the Buddha's teaching. The Buddha's wisdom is endowed with manifold excellent qualities, while His body is composed of a vast quantity of atoms of sheer compassion. He is the best among beings and is free from the twofold obscurations of afflictions and objects. Because He is free from the sleep of ignorance, the Buddha is called the Awakened One, and because he is free from the fetters of attachment, He is liberated. Familiar and comfortable with insubstantiality and motivated by great compassion, He remains active in the world so long as samsara exists in order to benefit living beings. Such qualities are not shared by the Private Buddhas or disciples, not to say anything of non-Buddhist exponents who are attached to erroneous views.[51]

Shantarakshita pursues his theme with evident seal in the last two stanzas of the text and their commentary. Buddhists, he says should generate pity for those who follow doctrines that are erroneously conceived. In our own case and the case of others, the experience of suffering has persisted for many eons and has been the cause of continuous circling in samsara. If now those who have followed mistaken doctrines turn to the teaching of the Buddha, it will be of great benefit to them. Therefore, he encourages us, turn to the teaching of the Middle Way, see the truth and become convinced of its excellence.

At this point, one shall become part of the compassionate family or race, the family of the Tathagatas. Such a worthy person possesses right understanding and great compassion and carries the burdens of others. His character is un-

adulterated by anything contrary to his exalted objective. Such is the great compassion of one who wishes to free other living beings from suffering.

Otherwise if the causes of suffering, of which rejection of the ultimate truth is the foremost, are allowed to increase, the result will be repeated rebirth in conditions of bondage. In this sense, the pursuit of mistaken doctrines is like adding fuel to a fire. Therefore, the greatly compassionate Buddhas remain in the world as long as samsara exists in order to accomplish the twofold benefit of self and others. On no account then should one disparage the Mahayana which is motivated by great compassion. After all, Shantarakshita remarks, it is better to fall short in the area of morality than it is to err in the field of wisdom, because by means of the former, one can at most gain heaven, but through the latter, one can achieve liberation. Those for whom reality is obscured by delusion have no hope of accomplishing virtue, to say nothing of liberation.

Therefore, Shantarakshita exhorts us to turn away from other doctrines and to concentrate on the teaching of Interdependent Origination which is completely free from the erroneous fabrications of imagination.[52]

Even ordinary people, Shantarakshita concludes, can see that the systems of others are confused even with regard to matters of common sense. The Teaching of the Buddha, on the other hand, is good in the beginning, middle and end. Like good gold, it can stand the threefold test of heating, cutting and rubbing. In other words, the teaching of the Buddha is not contradicted by perception or inference, nor is it inconsistent, that is to say, it is not contradicted by its own words. To this well-known explanation of the meaning of the threefold test of the teaching, Kamalashila adds another. He says that "good in the beginning, middle and end" also means good at the time of study, consideration and meditation, the three stages in the process of the acquisition of real knowledge.

The teaching of the Buddha is uncontaminated by worldly views. It is reality itself, the essence of real knowledge free from confusion. For this reason, the foremost among gods and men worship the Buddha.

Once one has examined all phenomena and understood the truth, and once one has seen the confusion of erroneous views in the teachings of others, one should produce compassion toward those who follow such mistaken ways. Then one can become a benefactor of the world. Adorned by knowledge and great compassion and highly developed in the skills of enlightenment, one should preserve the commitments of the sage and adhere to the right faith. This means following the Mahayana path by producing the resolve to attain enlightenment and emulating the careers of the Buddhas. Those who aspire to perfect knowledge who possess the keen eye of wisdom should therefore enter the Mahayana path that is illuminated by scripture and reasoning.[53] Then, as the master Nagar-

juna said, one will become like Avalokiteshvara and Amitabha who benefit innumerable living beings throughout countless lifetimes.[54]

In conclusion, if we consider what we have learned from Shantarakshita over the course of the final fifth of his clear and brilliant work, the *Madhyamakalankara*, we shall have to admit that, notwithstanding a couple of brief references, we have heard almost nothing about the doctrine of not-self or impersonality. On the contrary, we have heard a great deal about insubstantiality and emptiness, and the means of acquiring the supra mundane and exalted personality of an advanced Bodhisattva or Buddha. Such an advanced Bodhisattva or Buddha enjoys a multidimensional mode of being which permits him not only to experience transcendental freedom, but also to engage in the emanation of manifold diverse forms in the world for the benefit of living beings. These are the multiple dimensions of Buddhahood: terrestrial, celestial and transcendental, which the Mahayana extols as the supra mundane goal of religious life. They are the fruit of a long career of purification and evolution accomplished through the practice of the perfections of the Bodhisattva and culminating in the accumulations of merit and knowledge that are the prerequisites of Buddhahood.

If I am right in regarding Shantarakshita as an authoritative exponent of the central current in Buddhist thought, and I believe the agreement we have observed between his views and those of Vasubandhu, Asanga, Nagarjuna and the Buddha himself justifies me in this judgment, and if we are to take him at his word, then we have to conclude that the key conception in Buddhism is insubstantiality, emptiness or relativity and not self, not-self or any of the other provisional elements of the Buddhist ethico-religious tradition. All such provisional pedagogical devices such as the teachings of self, not-self and the rest have only a circumstantial relevance. One or the other of them may be preferable given the particular conditions of a specific therapeutic situation, but none of them is in any way final or absolute. Indeed, even Chandrakirti, the chief exponent of the most radical form of the Madhyamaka philosophy, quotes the *Ratnakuta-sutra* to the effect that it is better to cling to the self than to cling to emptiness.[55] The essential point to remember is that the conception of insubstantiality, emptiness or relativity, excluding as it does the notion of independent existence, effectively undermines and deconstructs all other concepts. It is far too well-known to scholars in the field to waste more words at this stage in this already lengthy paper to point out in detail that the conception of insubstantiality also deconstructs itself. It will be enough to remark that this most precious gem of the teaching of the Buddha, the immortal nectar of the Buddhist tradition has allowed Buddhism to function as an adaptable and effective system of psycho-

therapy and progressive soteriology for generations of suffering living beings, and that it continues today to be effective precisely because of the versatility and creativity that the Buddha's discovery of relativity imparted to it. Indeed, when the Buddha declared that he had no theory of his own and was free from all theories and dogmas, it certainly also employed that the Buddha and Buddhists might use any an all theoretical descriptions of the conscious condition so long as they happened to be useful and beneficial in a given case. "Everything is valid for him for whom Emptiness is valid," said Nagarjuna,[56] and therefore so long as one does not neglect the unique insight into reality that is the understanding of emptiness, the masters of the Buddhist tradition can freely offer humanity a religious and philosophical ideal of unparalleled scope and grandeur able to inspire people even in this time of confusion and disillusionment.

Notes

1. Murti, T.R.V., *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism,* George Allen and Unwin Ltd. London, 1970, p.20ff
2. *ibid.* p. 44-45
3. Nagarjuna, *Pratityasamutpadahridayakarika* and *Vyakhyana,* stanza 5.
4. *ibid.*
5. *ibid.*
6. *ibid.*
7. *ibid.*
8. Nagarjuna, *Mulamadhyamakakarika,* chapter 18, stanza 5.
9. *ibid.* chapter 18, stanza 1ff.
10. *ibid.* Chapter 18, stanzas 10-11 and Chandrakirti, *Prasannapada.*
11. Nagarjuna, *Shunyatasaptati*, Stanza 7.
12. *ibid.* stanza 8.
13. *ibid.* stanza 32.
14. Nagarjuna, *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, Chapter 18, stanza 6.
15. Nagarjuna, *Shunyatasaptati*, stanza 2.
16. *op.cit* Chapter 18, 5.
17. *op.cit.* 44
18. Chandrakirti, *Prasannapada,* Commentary to *Mulamadhyamakakarika,* Chapter 18, stanza 6.
19. Lindtner, Chr., *Nagarjuniana*, Akademisk Forlag, Copenhagen 1982, pp. 163-167
20. Nagarjuna, *Yuktishashtika*, stanza 4.

21. *ibid.* stanza 50.
22. *ibid.* stanza 54.
23. *ibid.* stanza 58.
24. Lindtner, Chr., *op.cit.,* pp. 103,115 and 117.
25. Nagarjuna,*Yuktishashtika*, stanza 60.
26. Anacker, S. *The Seven Works of Vasubandhu,* Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1980, *Madhyantavibhaga* and *Madhyantavibhagabhashya*, chapter 1, stanzas 18 & 19.
27. *ibid., Vimshatika*, stanza 10.
28. *ibid., Vimshatika*, stanza 21.
29. *ibid., Trisvabhavanirdesha*, stanza 37.
30. Ruegg, D.S. *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India* p. 88.
31. In this context, we may recall that the author pays homage to the Buddha as the teacher of Interdependent Origination in the benedictory stanza to the *Tattvasamgraha.*
32. Shantarakshita, *Madhyamakalankara* , stanza 81 and *Vritti* and Kamalashila, *Panjika.*
33. Nagarjuna, *Shunyatasaptati*, stanza 21.
34. *op.cit*, stanza 82.
35. Nagarjuna, *Yuktishashtika*, Stanza 46.
36. Shantarakshita, *Madhyamakalankara,* stanza 83 and *vritti* and Kamalashila, *Panjika.*
37. *ibid.* stanza 1.
38. Nagarjuna, *Yuktishashtika*, stanzas 31,32 and 33.
39. Nagarjuna, *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, Chapter 24, stanza 7.
40. Shantarakshita, *Madhyamakalankarakarika,* stanzas 84 & 85 and *Vritti*, and Kamalashila, *Panjika.*
41. *ibid.*, stanzas 86 and 87.
42. *ibid.* stanza 88.
43. *ibid.* stanza 89.
44. *ibid.* stanza 90.
45. Nagarjuna, *Shunyatasaptati*, stanza 52.
46. Nagarjuna, *Yuktishashtika*, stanza 34.
47. Shantarakshita, *Madhyamakalankarakarika*, stanzas 91 & 92 and *Vritti*, and Kamalashila, *Panjika.*
48. *ibid.* Stanza 93.
49. Nagarjuna, *Yuktishashtika*, stanzas 18 and 19.
50. *ibid.* stanza 35.

51. Shantarakshita, *Madhyamakalankara,* stanzas 94 & 95 and *Vritti*, Kamalashila, *Panjika.*
52. *ibid.* 96.
53. *ibid.* stanza 97.
54. Nagarjuna, *Suhrillekha*, stanzas 120 & 121.
55. Sprung, M, *Lucid Exposition of the Middle Way*, Prajna Press, Boulder, 1979, pp. 150-151.
56. Nagarjuna, *Vigrahavyavartani*, stanza 70.